



L. Hall Sculp.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London Mar. 1st 1777.

Edwards
Printed



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BELL'S EDITION
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN
COMPLETE, FROM
CHAUCEER to CHURCHILL.



**Cui mens diviniior atque os
 Magna sonaturum, des nominis
 hujus honorem.**

Edwards del.

F. Hall Sculp.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London March 1777.



THE *Golden D*
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON.

FROM
THE TEXT OF DR. NEWTON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND A
CRITIQUE ON PARADISE LOST,

BY JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1776.

POLITICAL WORKS

JOHN MILTON

THE TACTICS OF NEWTON

IN 1688



CRITIQUE ON THE HISTORY OF

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

EDINBURGH

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

PARADISE LOST.

A POEM IN TWELVE BOOKS.

THE AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

FROM

THE TEXT OF DR. NEWTON,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graeci! Propert.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1776.

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JOHN MASON



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THE LIFE OF
JOHN MILTON.

FROM a family and town of his name in Oxfordshire our Author derived his descent; but he was born at London in the year 1608. The publisher* of his works in prose (on whose veracity some part of this Narrative must entirely depend) dates his birth two years earlier than this; but, contradicting himself afterwards in his own computation, I reduce it to the time that Monsieur Bayle hath assigned, and for the same reason which prevailed with him to assign it. His father, John Milton, by profession a scrivener, lived in a reputable manner, on a competent estate entirely his own acquisition; having been early disinherited by his parents for renouncing the communion of the Church of Rome, to which they were zealously devoted. By his wife, Sarah Caston, he had likewise one daughter, named Anna, and another son, Christopher, whom he trained to the practice of the Common law; who in the Great Rebellion adhered to the Royal cause; and in the reign of King James II. by too easy a compliance with the doctrines of the Court, both religious and civil, he attained to the dignity of being made a judge of the Common Pleas; of which he died divested not long after the Revolution.

* Mr. Toland.

But John, the subject of the present Essay, was the favourite of his father's hopes, who, to cultivate the great genius which early displayed itself, was at the expense of a domestic tutor; whose care and capacity his pupil hath gratefully celebrated in an excellent *An. Ætat. 12.* Latin elegy. At his initiation he is said to have applied himself to letters with such indefatigable industry, that he rarely was prevailed with to quit his studies before midnight; which not only made him frequently subject to severe pains in his head, but likewise occasioned that weakness in his eyes which terminated in a total privation of sight. From a domestic education he was removed to St. Paul's school, to complete his acquaintance with the Classics, under the care of Dr. Gill: and after a short stay there was *An. Ætat. 15.* transplanted to Christ's College in Cambridge, where he distinguished himself in all kinds of academical exercises. Of this society he continued a member till he commenced Master of Arts; and then leaving the University, he returned to his father, who *An. Ætat. 23.* had quitted the Town, and lived at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where he pursued his studies with unparalleled assiduity and success.

After some years spent in this studious retirement his mother died; and then he prevailed with his father to gratify an inclination he had long entertained *An. Ætat. 30.* of seeing foreign countries. Sir Henry Wotton, at that time Provost of Eton College, gave

him a letter of advice * for the direction of his travels; but by not observing an excellent maxim in it, he incurred great danger, by disputing against the superstition of the Church of Rome within the verge

* " SIR,

Eton College, 10th April, 1638.

" It was a special favour when you lately bestowed upon me here the first taste of your acquaintance, though no longer than to make me know that I wanted more time to value it, and to enjoy it rightly. And in truth, if I could then have imagined your farther stay in these parts, which I understood afterwards by Mr. H. I would have been bold, in our vulgar phrase, to mend my draught, for you left me with an extreme thirst, and to have begged your conversation again, jointly with your said learned friend, at a poor meal or two, that we might have banded together some good authors of the ancient time, among which I observed you to have been familiar.

" Since your going, you have charged me with new obligations, both for a very kind letter from you, dated the 6th of this month, and for a dainty piece of entertainment that came therewith; wherein I should much commend the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish with a certain Doric delicacy in your Songs and Odes; wherein I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language, *ipsi mollities*. But I must not omit to tell you, that I now only owe you thanks for intimating unto me, how modestly soever, the true artificer: for the work itself I had viewed some good while before with singular delight, having received it from our common friend Mr. R. in the very close of the late R's poems, printed at Oxford, whereunto it is added, as I now suppose, that the accessory might help out the principal, according to the art of stationers, and leave the reader *con la bocca dolce*.

" Now, Sir, concerning your travels, wherein I may challenge a little more privilege of discourse with you; I suppose you will not blanch Paris in your way: therefore I have been bold to trouble you with a few lines to Mr. M. B. whom you shall easily find attending the young Lord S. as his governor; and you may surely receive from him good directions for shaping of your farther journey into Italy, where he did reside, by my choice, some time for the King, after mine own recess from Venice.

" I should think that your best line will be through the whole length of France to Marseilles, and thence by sea

of the Vatican. Having employed his curiosity about two years in France and Italy *, on the news of a Civil war breaking out in England, he returned without taking a survey of Greece and Sicily, as, at his setting out, the scheme was projected. At Paris the

"to Genoa, whence the passage into Tuscany is as diurnal as a Graveland barge. I hasten, as you do, to Florence or Sienna, the rather to tell you a short story, from the interest you have given me in your safety.

"At Sienna I was tabled in the house of one Alberto Scipione, an old Roman courtier in dangerous times, having been steward to the Duca di Pagliano, who with all his family were strangled, save this only man, that escaped by foresight of the tempest. With him I had often much chat of those affairs; into which he took pleasure to look back from his native harbour; and at my departure toward Rome, which had been the center of his experience, I had won confidence enough to beg his advice how I might carry myself securely there, without offense of others, or of my own conscience. *Signor, Arrigo meo*, says he, *I pensieri stretti, et il viso sciolto*, that is, "Your thoughts close, and your countenance loose, will go safely over the whole world." Of which Delphian oracle (for so I have found it) your judgment doth need no commentary; and therefore, Sir, I will commit you with it to the best of all securities, God's dear love, remaining your friend, as much at command as any of longer date.

"H. WOTTON.

P. S. "Sir, I have expressly sent this by my foot-boy, to prevent your departure without some acknowledgment from me of the receipt of your obliging letter, having myself, through some business, I know not how, neglected the ordinary conveyance. In any part where I shall understand you fixed, I shall be glad and diligent to entertain you with home novelties, even for some fomentation of our friendship, too soon interrupted in the cradle."

* *Et jam his viridi surgebat culmus arista,
Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes,—
Nec dum aderat Thyrsis: pastorem scilicet illum
Dulcis amor Musae Thutca retinebat in urbe.*

Epitaph. Dan.

Lord Viscount Scudamore, ambassador from King Charles I. at the court of France, introduced him to the acquaintance of Grotius *, who, at that time, was honoured with the same character there by Christina Queen of Sweden. In Rome, Genoa, Florence, and other cities of Italy, he contracted a familiarity with those who were of highest reputation for wit and learning; several of whom gave him very obliging testimonies of their friendship and esteem, which are printed before his Latin poems. The first of them was written by Manso Marquis of Villa, a great patron of Tasso, by whom he is celebrated in his poem on the conquest of Jerusalem †. It is highly probable that to his conversation with this noble Neapolitan we owe the first design which Milton conceived of writing an epic poem: and it appears, by some Latin verses addressed to the Marquis with the title of Mansus, that he intended to fix on King Arthur for his hero: but Arthur was reserved to another destiny!

Returning from his travels, he found England on the point of being involved in blood and An. Ætat. 37. confusion. It seems wonderful that one of so warm and daring a spirit as his certainly was, should be restrained from the camp in those unnatural commotions. I suppose we may impute it wholly to the great deference he paid to paternal authority, that he re-

* *Defensio Secunda*, p. 96. *Fol.*

† “*Fra Cavalier' magnanimi, e cortesi,*
“*Resplende il Manso.*” — *Lib. 20.*

tired to lodgings provided for him in the City; which being commodious for the reception of his sister's sons, and some other young gentlemen, he undertook their education; and is said to have formed them on the same plan which he afterwards published in a short tractate inscribed to his friend Mr. Hartlib.

In this philosophical course he continued without a wife to the year 1643; when he married Mary the daughter of Richard Powell of Forest-hill in Oxfordshire; a gentleman of estate and reputation in that county, and of principles so very opposite to his son-in-law, that the marriage is more to be wondered at than the separation which ensued in little more than a month after she had cohabited with him in London. Her desertion provoked him both to write several treatises concerning the doctrine and discipline of divorce, and also to make his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty; but before he had engaged her affections to conclude the marriage-treaty, in a visit at one of his relations he found his wife prostrate before him, imploring forgiveness and reconciliation. It is not to be doubted but an interview of this nature, so little expected, must wonderfully affect him; and perhaps the impressions it made on his imaginations contributed much to the painting of that pathetic scene in *Paradise Lost* *, in which Eve addresseth herself to Adam for pardon and peace. At

* Book X. ver. 909.

the intercession of his friends who were present, after a short reluctance, he generously sacrificed all his resentment to her tears.

.....Soon his heart relented
Tow'rd's her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress!

And after this re-union, so far was he from retaining an unkind memory of the provocations which he had received from her ill conduct, that when the King's cause was entirely oppressed, and her father, who had been active in his loyalty, was exposed to sequestration, Milton received both him and his family to protection and free entertainment in his own house, 'till their affairs were accommodated by his interest in the victorious faction.

For he was now grown famous by his Polemical writings of various kinds, and held in *An. Hist. 47* great favour and esteem by those who had power to dispose of all preferments in the state. 'Tis in vain to dissemble, and far be it from me to defend, his engaging with a party combined in the destruction of our Church and Monarchy. Yet, leaving the justification of a misguided sincerity to be debated in the schools, may I presume to observe in his favour that his zeal, distempered and furious as it was, does not appear to have been inspirited by self-interested views; for it is affirmed, that though he lived always in a frugal retirement, and before his death had dis-

posed of his library, (which we may suppose to have been a valuable collection) he left no more than fifteen hundred pounds behind him for the support of his family: and whoever considers the posts to which he was advanced, and the times in which he enjoyed them, will, I believe, confess he might have accumulated a much more plentiful fortune. In a dispassionate mind it will not require any extraordinary measure of candour to conclude, that though he abode in the heritage of oppressors, and the spoils of his country lay at his feet; neither his conscience nor his honour could stoop to gather them.

A commission to constitute him Adjutant-general An. Ætat. 42. to Sir William Waller was promised, but soon superseded by Waller's being laid aside, when his masters thought it proper to new-model their army. However, the keenness of his pen had so effectually recommended him to Cromwell's esteem, that when he took the reins of government into his own hand, he advanced him to be Latin secretary both to himself and the Parliament: the former of these preferments he enjoyed both under the Usurper and his son; the other 'till King Charles II. was restored. For some time he had an apartment for his family in Whitehall; but his health requiring a freer accession of air, he was obliged to remove from thence to lodgings which opened into St. James's Park. Not long after his settlement there his wife died in child-

bed; and much about the time of her death a gutta serena, which had for several years been gradually increasing, totally extinguished his sight *. In this melancholic condition he was easily prevailed with to think of taking another wife, who was Catharine the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney; and she too, in less than a year after their marriage, died in the same unfortunate manner as the former had done; to whose memory he does honour in one of his Sonnets.

These private calamities were much heightened by the different figure he was likely to make in the *An. Ret. si.* new scene of affairs which was going to be acted in the

* It was the sight of his left eye that he lost first; and it was at the desire of his friend Leonard Philaras, the Duke of Parma's minister at Paris, that he sent him a particular account of his case, and of the manner of his growing blind, for him to consult Thevenot the physician, who was reckoned famous in cases of the eyes. The letter is the fifteenth of his Familiar Epistles, is dated September 28, 1654, and is thus translated by Mr. Richardson:

" Since you advise me not to fling away all hopes of recovering my sight, for that you have a friend at Paris, Thevenot the physician, particularly famous for the eyes, whom you offer to consult in my behalf, if you receive from me an account by which he may judge of the causes and symptoms of my disease, I will do what you advise me to, that I may not seem to refuse any assistance that is offered, perhaps from God.

" I think 'tis about ten years, more or less, since I began to perceive that my eye-sight grew weak and dim, and at the same time my spleen and bowels to be oppressed and troubled with flatulency; and in the morning when I began to read, according to custom, my eyes grew painful immediately, and to refuse reading, but were refreshed after a moderate exercise of the body. A certain iris began to surround the light of the candle if I looked at it; soon after which, on the left part of the left eye (for that was

state : for all things now conspiring to promote the King's restoration, he was too conscious of his own activity during the usurpation to expect any favour from the Crown; and therefore he prudently absconded 'till the act of Oblivion was published; by which he was only rendered incapable of bearing any office in the nation. Many had a very just esteem of his admirable parts and learning who detested his principles, by whose intercession his pardon passed the seals: and I wish the laws of Civil history could have extended the benefit of that oblivion to the memory of his guilt which was indulged to his person; *Ne tanti facinoris immanitas aut extitisse, aut non vindicata fuisse, videatur.*

Having thus gained a full protection from the go-
 " some years sooner clouded) a mist arose which hid every
 " thing on that side; and looking forward, if I shut my
 " right eye objects appeared smaller. My other eye also,
 " for these last three years, failing by degrees, some months
 " before all sight was abolished, things which I looked upon
 " seemed to swim to the right and left; certain inveterate
 " vapours seem to possess my forehead and temples, which
 " after meat, especially quite to evening, generally urge
 " and depress my eyes with a sleepy heaviness: nor would I
 " I omit, that whilst there was as yet some remainder of sight,
 " I no sooner lay down in my bed, and turned on my side,
 " but a copious light dazzled out of my shut eyes; and as
 " my sight diminished every day, colours gradually more
 " obscure flashed out with vehemence; but now that the
 " lucid is in a manner wholly extinct, a direct blackness,
 " or else spotted, and, as it were, woven with ash-colour,
 " is used to pour itself in. Nevertheless, the constant and
 " settled darkness that is before me, as well by night as
 " by day, seems nearer to the whitish than the blackish; and
 " the eye rolling itself a little, seems to admit I know
 " not what little smallness of light as through a chink."

vernment, (which was in truth more than he could have reasonably hoped) he appeared as much in public as he formerly used to do; and employing his friend Dr. Paget to make choice of a third consort, on his recommendation he married Elizabeth the daughter of Mr. Minshul, a Cheshire gentleman, by whom he had no issue. Three daughters by his first wife were then living, two of whom are said to have been very serviceable to him in his studies: for, having been instructed to pronounce not only the modern, but also the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, they read in their respective originals whatever authors he wanted to consult, though they understood none but their mother-tongue. This employment, however, was too unpleasant to be continued for any long process of time; and therefore he dismissed them, to receive an education more agreeable to their sex and temper.

We come now to take a survey of him in that point of view in which he will be looked on by all succeeding ages with equal delight and admiration. An interval of above twenty years had elapsed since he wrote the *Mask of Comus* *, *L'Allegro*,
Il Penseroso, and *Lycidas* †; all in such an
 An. Æt. * 26.
 † 29.
 exquisite strain, that though he had left no other monuments of his genius behind him, his name had been immortal. But neither the infirmities of age and constitution, nor the vicissitudes of fortune, could

depress the vigour of his mind, or divert it from executing a design he had long conceived of writing an heroic poem *. The Fall of Man was a subject which he had some years before fixed on for a tragedy, which he intended to form by the models of Antiquity; and some, not without probability, say the play opened with that speech in the Fourth Book of *Paradise Lost*, ver. 32. which is addressed by Satan to the Sun. Were it material, I believe I could produce other passages which more plainly appear to have been originally intended for the scene. But whatever truth there may be in this report, 'tis certain that he did not begin to mold his subject in the form which it bears now before he had concluded his controversy with Salmasius and More; when he had wholly lost the use of his eyes, and was forced to employ in the office of an amanuensis any friend who accidentally paid him a visit. Yet, under all these discouragements and various interruptions, in the year 1669 he published his *Paradise Lost* †; the noblest Poem, next to those of Homer and Virgil, that ever the wit of man produced in any age or nation. Need I mention any other evidence of its inestimable worth, than that the finest geniuses who have succeeded him have ever esteemed it a merit to relish and illustrate its beauties? whilst the critic who gazed, with so much

* *Paradise Lost*. B. IX. v. 26.

† Milton's contract with his bookseller, S. Simmons, for the copy, bears date April 27, 1667.

wanton malice, on the nakedness of Shakespeare when he slept, after having * formally declared war against it, wanted courage to make his attack, flushed though he was with his conquests over Julius Cæsar and the Moor; which insolence his muse, like the other assassins of Cæsar †, severely revenged on herself; and not long after her triumph became her own executioner. Nor is it unworthy our observation, that though, perhaps, no one of our English poets hath excited so many admirers to imitate his manner, yet I think never any was known to aspire to emulation: even the late ingenious Mr. Philips, who, in the colours of style, came the nearest of all the copiers to resemble the great original, made his distant advances with a filial reverence, and restrained his ambition within the same bounds which Lucretius prescribed to his own imitation:

Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem
Quod TE imitari aveo: quid enim contendat hirundo
Sycnis?.....

And now, perhaps, it may pass for fiction what with great veracity I affirm to be fact, that Milton, after having, with much difficulty, prevailed to have this divine Poem licensed for the press, could sell the copy for no more than fifteen pounds; the payment of which valuable consideration depended on the sale of three numerous impressions. So unreasonably may

* The Tragedies of the last age considered, p. 143.

† Vide Edgar.

personal prejudice affect the most excellent performances!

About two years after, together with Samson Agonistes, (a tragedy not unworthy the Grecian stage when Athens was in her glory), he published *Paradise Regain'd* *. But, Oh! what a falling off was there!—Of which I shall say no more, than that there is scarcely a more remarkable instance of the frailty of human reason than our Author gave in preferring this Poem to *Paradise Lost*; nor a more instructive caution to the best writers, to be very diffident in deciding the merit of their own productions.

And thus, having attended him to the sixty-sixth year of his age, as closely as such imperfect lights as men of letters and retirement usually leave to guide our inquiry would allow, it now only remains to be recorded, that, in the year 1674, the gout put a period to his life at Bunhill near London; from whence his body was conveyed to St. Giles's church by Cripplegate, where it lies interred in the chancel; but neither has nor wants a monument to perpetuate his memory.

In his youth he is said to have been extremely handsome: the colour of his hair was a light-brown; the symmetry of his features exact, enlivened with an agreeable air, and a beautiful mixture of fair and

* They were licensed July 2, 1670, but not printed before the year ensuing.

ruddy; which occasioned the marquis of Villa to give his Epigram the same turn of thought which Gregory, Arch-deacon of Rome, had employed above a thousand years before, in praising the amiable complexions of some English youths before their conversion to Christianity*. His stature (as we find it measured by himself †) did not exceed the middle size; neither too lean, nor corpulent; his limbs well proportioned, nervous, and active; serviceable in all respects to his exercising the sword, in which he much delighted, and wanted neither skill nor courage to resent an affront from men of the most athletic constitutions. In his diet he was abstemious; not delicate in the choice of his dishes; and strong liquors of all kinds were his aversion. Being too sadly convinced how much his health had suffered by night-studies in his younger years, he used to go early (seldom later than nine) to rest, and rose commonly before five in the morning. It is reported, (and there is a passage in one of his Latin Elegies to countenance the tradition) that his fancy made the happiest flights in the Spring: but one of his nephews used to deliver it as Milton's own observation, that his invention was in its highest perfection from September to the Vernal Æquinox: however it was, the great inequalities to be found in his compositions are incontestible proofs that,

* Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic
Non Anglus, verum hercle Angelus ipse foret.

† Defensio Secunda, p. 87. Fol.

in some seasons, he was but one of the people. When blindness restrained him from other exercises, he had a machine to swing in for the preservation of his health; and diverted himself in his chamber with playing on an organ. His deportment was erect, open, affable; his conversation easy, cheerful, instructive; his wit on all occasions at command, facetious, grave, or satirical, as the subject required. His judgment, when disengaged from religious and political speculations, was just and penetrating; his apprehension quick; his memory tenacious of what he read; his reading only not so extensive as his genius, for that was universal. And having treasured up such immense stores of science, perhaps the faculties of his soul grew more vigorous after he was deprived of his sight; and his imagination (naturally sublime, and enlarged by reading romances *, of which he was much enamoured in his youth) when it was wholly abstracted from material objects, was more at liberty to make such amazing excursions into the ideal world, when, in composing his Divine Work, he was tempted to range

Beyond the visible diurnal sphere.

With so many accomplishments, not to have had some faults and misfortunes, to be laid in the balance with the same and felicity of writing *Paradise Lost*, would have been too great a portion for humanity.

ELIJAH FENTON.

* His *Apology for Smectymnus*, p. 177. *Fol.*

To this account of Milton it may be proper to add something concerning his family. We said before, that he had a younger brother and a sister. His brother, Christopher Milton, was a man of totally opposite principles; was a strong Royalist, and after the Civil war made his composition through his brother's interest; had been entered young a student in the Inner Temple, of which house he lived to be an ancient bencher; and being a professed Papist, was, in the reign of James II. made a judge and knighted; but soon obtained his quietus by reason of his age and infirmities, and retired to Ipswich, where he lived all the latter part of his life. His sister, Anne Milton, had a considerable fortune given her by her father in marriage with Mr. Edward Philips (son of Mr. Edward Philips of Shrewsbury) who coming young to London, was bred up in the Crown-office in Chancery, and at length became secondary of the office under Mr. Bembo. By him she had, besides other children who died infants, two sons, Edward and John. Among our Author's juvenile poems there is a copy of verses on the Death of a fair Infant dying of a cough; and this being written in his 17th year, as it is said in the title, it may be naturally inferred that Mrs. Philips was elder than either of her brothers. She had likewise two daughters, Mary, who died very young, and Anne, who was living in 1694, by a second

husband, Mr. Thomas Agar, who succeeded his intimate friend Mr. Philips in his place in the Crown-office, which he enjoyed many years, and left to Mr. Thomas Milton, son of Sir Christopher before mentioned.

Our Author, by his first wife, had four children; a son, who died an infant, and three daughters, who survived him. By his second wife he had only one daughter, who died soon after her mother, who died in child-bed; and by his last wife he had no children at all. His daughters were not sent to school, but were instructed by a mistress kept at home for that purpose; and he himself, excusing the eldest on account of an impediment in her speech, taught the two others to read and pronounce Greek and Latin, and several other languages, without understanding any but English, for he used to say that one tongue was enough for a woman; but this employment was very irksome to them, and this, together with the sharpness and severity of their mother-in-law, made them very uneasy at home; and therefore they were all sent abroad to learn things more proper for them, and particularly embroidery in gold and silver. As Milton, at his death, left his affairs very much in the power of his widow, tho' she acknowledged that he died worth one thousand five hundred pounds, yet she allowed but one hundred pounds to each of his three daughters. Anne, the eldest, was decrepit and deformed, but had a ve-

ry handsome face; she married a master-builder, and died in childbed of her first child, who died with her. Mary, the second, lived and died single. Deborah, the youngest, in her father's life-time, went over to Ireland with a lady, and afterwards was married to Mr. Abraham Clarke, a weaver in Spitalfields, and died in August 1727, in the 76th year of her age. She is said to have been a woman of good understanding and genteel behaviour, though in low circumstances. As she had been often called upon to read Homer and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to her father, she could have repeated a considerable number of verses from the beginning of both these poets, as Mr. Ward, Professor of Rhetoric in Gresham College, relates upon his own knowledge; and another gentleman has informed me, that he has heard her repeat several verses likewise out of Euripides. Mr. Addison, and the other gentlemen who had opportunities of seeing her, knew her immediately to be Milton's daughter by the similitude of her countenance to her father's picture; and Mr. Addison made her a handsome present of a purse of guineas, with a promise of procuring for her some annual provision for her life; but his death happening soon after, she lost the benefit of his generous design. She received presents, likewise, from several other gentlemen, and Queen Caroline sent her fifty pounds by the hands of Dr. Freind the physician. She had ten children, seven sons and three daughters;

but none of them had any children, except one of her sons, named Caleb, and one of her daughters, named Elizabeth. Caleb went to Fort St. George in the East Indies, where he married, and had two sons, Abraham and Isaac; the elder of whom came to England with the late Governor Harrison, but returned upon advice of his father's death, and whether he or his brother be now living is uncertain. Elizabeth, the youngest child of Mrs. Clarke, was married to Mr. Thomas Foster, a weaver in Spital-fields, and had seven children, who are all dead; and she herself is aged about sixty, and weak and infirm. She seemeth to be a good plain sensible woman, and has confirmed several particulars related above.

To what has been said in the Life, of our Author's having no monument, it may not be improper to add, that on inquiry at St. Giles's church, the sexton shewed a small monument, which he said was supposed to be Milton's; but the inscription had never been legible since he was employed in that office, which he has possessed about forty years. This, sure, could never have happened in so short a space of time, unless the Epitaph had been industriously erased; and that supposition carries with it so much inhumanity, that we ought to believe it was not erected to his memory.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE WORKS of inferior geniuses have their infancy, and often receive additions of strength and beauty in the several impressions they undergo whilst their authors live: but the following Poem came into the world, like the persons whom it celebrates, in a state of maturity. However, though in the first edition it was disposed into *Ten Books only*, Milton thought proper, in the second, to make a new division of it into Twelve: not, I suppose, with respect to the *Aeneis*, (for he was, in both senses of the phrase, above imitation) but more probably, because the length of the Seventh and Tenth required a pause in the narration, he divided them each into two; on which distribution, to the beginning of those Books which are now the Eighth and Twelfth, he added the following verses, which were necessary to make a connexion.

Book VIII. ver. 1.

'The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking; still stood fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.

The latter half of the verse was taken from this in the first edition.

To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd.

Book XII. ver. 1.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
 Though bent on speed: so here th' arch-angel paus'd,
 Betwixt the world destroy'd, and world restor'd;
 If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:
 Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.

At the same time the Author made some few additions in other places of the Poem, which are here inserted for the satisfaction of the curious.

Book V. ver. 637.

" They eat, they drink, and with refection sweet
 " Are fill'd, before th' all-bounteous King, &c.

were thus enlarged in the second edition.

They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality, and joy, (secure
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
 Excess) before th' all-bounteous King, &c.

Book XI. ver. 484. after

" Intestine stone, and ulcer, colic-pangs,

these three verses were added,

Daemoniac Phrenzy, mooping Melancholy,
 And moon-struck Madness, pining Atrophy;
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting Pestilence.

And ver. 551. of the same Book, which was originally thus,

" Of rend'ring up. Michael to him reply'd.

receiv'd this addition,

Of rend'ring up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution. Michael reply'd.

A
GENERAL CRITIQUE

UPON THE
PARADISE LOST.

BY JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graeci!

Proper.

THERE is nothing in nature more irksome than general discourses, especially when they turn chiefly upon words: for this reason I shall wave the discussion of that point which was started some years since, Whether Milton's *Paradise Lost* may be called an Heroic Poem? Those who will not give it that title may call it (if they please) a Divine Poem. It will be sufficient to its perfection if it has in it all the beauties of the highest kind of poetry; and as for those who alledge it is not an heroic poem, they advance no more to the diminution of it, than if they should say Adam is not *Æneas*, nor Eve Helen.

I shall therefore examine it by the rules of Epic poetry, and see whether it falls short of the *Iliad* or *Æneid* in the beauties which are essential to that kind of writing. The first thing to be considered in an epic poem is the Fable, which is perfect or imperfect ac-

Book XII. ver. 1.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed: so here th' arch-angel pans'd,
Betwixt the world destroy'd, and world restor'd;
If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.

At the same time the Author made some few additions in other places of the Poem, which are here inserted for the satisfaction of the curious.

Book V. ver. 637.

" They eat, they drink, and with refection sweet
" Are fill'd, before th' all-bounteous King, &c.

were thus enlarged in the second edition.

They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality, and joy, (secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess) before th' all-bounteous King, &c.

Book XI. ver. 434. after

" Intestine stone, and ulcer, colic-pangs,

these three verses were added,

Daemoniac Phrenzy, mooping Melancholy,
And moon-struck Madness, pining Atrophy;
Marasmus, and wide-wasting Pestilence.

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I shall therefore examine it by the rules of Epic poetry, and see whether it falls short of the *Iliad* or *Aeneid* in the beauties which are essential to that kind of writing. The first thing to be considered in an epic poem is the Fable, which is perfect or imperfect ac-

cording as the Action, which it relates, is more or less so. This Action should have three qualifications in it. First, it should be but **One Action**: Secondly, it should be an **Entire Action**: and, Thirdly, it should be a **Great Action**. To consider the Action of the *Iliad*, *Æneid*, and *Paradise Lost*, in these three several lights. Homer, to preserve the Unity of his Action, hastens into the midst of things, as Horace has observed: had he gone up to Leda's egg, or begun much later, even at the rape of Helen, or the investing of Troy, it is manifest that the story of the poem would have been a series of several Actions. He, therefore, opens his poem with the discord of his princes, and artfully interweaves, in the several succeeding parts of it, an account of every thing material which relates to them, and had passed before this fatal dissention. After the same manner *Æneas* makes his first appearance in the *Tyrrhene seas*, and within sight of *Italy*, because the Action proposed to be celebrated was that of his settling himself in *Lathum*: but because it was necessary for the reader to know what had happened to him in the taking of *Troy*, and in the preceding parts of his voyage, *Virgil* makes his hero relate it by way of episode, in the second and third books of the *Æneid*; the contents of both which books come before those of the first book in the thread of the story, though, for preserving of this Unity of Action, they follow it in the disposition of the poem. *Milton*, in imitation of these two great poets, opens his *Paradise Lost* with

an infernal council plotting the fall of Man, which is the Action he proposed to celebrate; and as for those great actions, the battle of the angels, and the creation of the world, (which preceded in point of time, and which, in my opinion, would have entirely destroyed the Unity of his principal Action, had he related them in the same order that they happened) he cast them into the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Books, by way of episode to this noble Poem.

Aristotle himself allows, that Homer has nothing to boast of as to the Unity of his Fable, though, at the same time, that great critic and philosopher endeavours to palliate this imperfection in the Greek poet, by imputing it, in some measure, to the very nature of an epic poem. Some have been of opinion that the *Æneid* also labours in this particular, and has episodes which may be looked upon as excrescences rather than as parts of the Action. On the contrary, the Poem which we have now under our consideration hath no other episodes than such as naturally arise from the subject, and yet is filled with such a multitude of astonishing incidents, that it gives us at the same time a pleasure of the greatest variety, and of the greatest simplicity; uniform in its nature, though diversified in the execution.

I must observe also, that as Virgil, in the poem which was designed to celebrate the original of the Roman empire, has described the birth of its great

great rival, the Carthaginian commonwealth, Milton, with the like art, in his Poem on the fall of Man, has related the fall of those angels who are his professed enemies. Beside the many other beauties in such an episode, its running parallel with the great Action of the Poem hinders it from breaking the Unity so much as another episode would have done that had not so great an affinity with the principal subject. In short, this is the same kind of beauty which the critics admire in the Spanish Friar; or, the Double Discovery, where the two different plots look like counterparts and copies of one another.

The second qualification required in the Action of an epic poem is, that it should be an Entire Action. An Action is entire when it is complete in all its parts; or, as Aristotle describes it, when it consists of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it, that is not related to it; as, on the contrary, no single step should be omitted in that just and regular progress which it must be supposed to take from its original to its consummation. Thus we see the anger of Achilles in its birth, its continuance, and effects; and Æneas's settlement in Italy carried on through all the oppositions in his way to it both by sea and land. The Action in Milton excels, I think, both the former in this particular; we see it contrived in Hell, executed upon Earth, and punished by Heaven. The parts

of it are told in the most distinct manner, and grow out of one another in the most natural order.

The third qualification of an epic poem is its Greatness. The anger of Achilles was of such consequence that it embroiled the kings of Greece, destroyed the heroes of Asia, and engaged all the gods in factions. Aeneas's settlement in Italy produced the Cæsars, and gave birth to the Roman empire. Milton's subject was still greater than either of the former; it does not determine the fate of single persons or nations, but of a whole species. The united powers of Hell are joined together for the destruction of mankind, which they effected in part, and would have completed, had not Omnipotence itself interposed. The principal actors are Man in his greatest perfection, and Woman in her highest beauty. Their enemies are the fallen Angels; the Messiah their friend, and the Almighty their protector. In short, every thing that is great in the whole circle of being, whether within the verge of Nature or out of it, has a proper part assigned it in this admirable Poem.

In poetry, as in architecture, not only the whole, but the principal members, and every part of them, should be great. I will not presume to say that the book of Games in the *Æneid*, or that in the *Iliad*, are not of this nature; nor to reprehend Virgil's simile of the Top, and many other of the same kind in the *Iliad*, as liable to any censure in this particular; but I think we may say, without derogating from those

wonderful performances, that there is an indisputable and unquestioned magnificence in every part of Paradise Lost, and indeed a much greater than could have been formed upon any Pagan system.

But Aristotle, by the Greatness of the Action, does not only mean that it should be great in its nature, but also in its duration; or, in other words, that it should have a due length in it, as well as what we properly call Greatness. The just measure of this kind of magnitude he explains by the following similitude. An animal, no bigger than a mite, cannot appear perfect to the eye, because the sight takes it in at once, and has only a confused idea of the whole, and not a distinct idea of all its parts: if, on the contrary, you should suppose an animal of ten thousand furlongs in length, the eye would be so filled with a single part of it, that it could not give the mind an idea of the whole. What these animals are to the eye, a very short or a very long Action would be to the memory. The first would be, as it were, lost and swallowed up by it, and the other difficult to be contained in it. Homer and Virgil have shown their principal art in this particular; the Action of the Iliad, and that of the Æneid, were in themselves exceeding short, but are so beautifully extended and diversified by the invention of episodes, and the machinery of gods, with the like poetical ornaments, that they make up an agreeable story, sufficient to employ the memory, without overcharging it. Milton's Action is

enriched with such a variety of circumstances, that I have taken as much pleasure in reading the Contents of his Books, as in the best invented story I ever met with. It is possible that the traditions on which the *Iliad* and *Æneid* were built had more circumstances in them than the history of the fall of Man, as it is related in Scripture: besides, it was easier for Homer and Virgil to dash the truth with fiction, as they were in no danger of offending the religion of their country by it: but as for Milton, he had not only a very few circumstances upon which to raise his Poem, but was also obliged to proceed with the greatest caution in every thing that he added out of his own invention. And, indeed, notwithstanding all the restraints he was under, he has filled his story with so many surprising incidents, which bear so close analogy with what is delivered in Holy Writ, that it is capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without giving offence to the most scrupulous.

The modern critics have collected, from several hints in the *Iliad* and *Æneid*, the space of time which is taken up by the Action of each of those poems; but as a great part of Milton's story was transacted in regions that lie out of the reach of the sun and the sphere of day, it is impossible to gratify the reader with such a calculation, which indeed would be more curious than instructive; none of the critics, either ancient or modern, having laid down rules to cir-

cumscribe the Action of an epic poem within any determined number of years, days, or hours. But of this more particularly hereafter.

Having examined the Action of *Paradise Lost*, let us, in the next place, consider the Actors. This is Aristotle's method of considering; first, the Fable; and, secondly, the Manners; or, as we generally call them in English, the Fable and the Characters.

Homer has excelled all the heroic poets that ever wrote in the multitude and variety of his Characters. Every god that is admitted into his poem acts a part which would have been suitable to no other deity. His princes are as much distinguished by their manners as by their dominions; and even those among them whose characters seem wholly made up of courage, differ from one another as to the particular kinds of courage in which they excel. In short, there is scarce a speech or action in the *Iliad* which the reader may not ascribe to the person that speaks or acts, without seeing his name at the head of it.

Homer does not only outshine all other poets in the variety, but also in the novelty of his Characters. He has introduced among his Grecian-princes a person who had lived in three ages of men, and conversed with Theseus, Hercules, Polyphemus, and the first race of heroes. His principal Actor is the son of a goddess, not to mention the offspring of other deities, who have likewise a place in his poem, and the venerable Trojan prince who was the father of so many

kings and heroes. There is in these several Characters of Homer a certain dignity, as well as novelty, which adapts them in a more peculiar manner to the nature of an heroic poem: though, at the same time, to give them the greater variety, he has described a Vulcan, that is, a buffoon, among his gods, and a Thersites among his mortals.

Virgil falls infinitely short of Homer in the Characters of his poem, both as to their variety and novelty. Æneas is indeed a perfect character; but as for Achates, though he is styled the hero's friend, he does nothing in the whole poem which may deserve that title. Gyas, Mnestheus, Sergestus, and Cloanthus, are all of them men of the same stamp and character.

-----*fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum.*

Virg.

There are, indeed, several very natural incidents in the part of Ascanius, as that of Dido cannot be sufficiently admired. I do not see any thing new or particular in Turnus. Pallas and Evander are remote copies of Hector and Priam, as Lausus and Mezentius are almost parallels to Pallas and Evander. The characters of Nisus and Euryalus are beautiful, but common. We must not forget the parts of Sinon, Camilla, and some few others, which are fine improvements on the Greek poet. In short, there is neither that variety nor novelty in the persons of the Æneid, which we meet with in those of the Iliad.

If we look into the Characters of Milton, we shall find that he has introduced all the variety his fable

was capable of receiving. The whole species of mankind was in two persons, at the time to which the subject of his Poem is confined. We have, however, four distinct Characters in these two persons. We see man and woman in the highest innocence and perfection, and in the most abject state of guilt and infirmity. The two last Characters are, indeed, very common and obvious, but the two first are not only more magnificent, but more new than any Characters either in Virgil or Homer, or indeed in the whole circle of Nature.

Milton was so sensible of this defect in the subject of his Poem, and of the few Characters it would afford him, that he has brought into it two Actors of a shadowy and fictitious nature, in the persons of Sin and Death, by which means he has wrought into the body of his fable a very beautiful and well-invented allegory: but notwithstanding the fineness of this allegory may atone for it in some measure, I cannot think that persons of such a chimerical existence are proper Actors in an epic poem; because there is not that measure of probability annexed to them which is requisite in writings of this kind, as I shall show more at large hereafter.

Virgil has, indeed, admitted Fame as an Actress in the *Aeneid*; but the part she acts is very short, and none of the most admired circumstances in that divine work. We find in mock-heroic poems, particularly in the *Dispensary* and the *Lutrin*, several allegorical persons of this nature, which are very beautiful in those compositions, and may, perhaps, be used as an argu-

ment that the authors of them were of opinion such characters might have a place in an epic work: for my own part, I should be glad the reader would think so for the sake of the Poem I am now examining, and must farther add, that if such empty unsubstantial beings may be ever made use of on this occasion, never were any more nicely imagined, and employed in more proper actions; than those of which I am now speaking.

Another principal actor in this Poem is the great enemy of mankind. The part of Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey* is very much admired by Aristotle, as perplexing that fable with very agreeable plots and intricacies, not only by the many adventures in his voyage, and the subtlety of his behaviour, but by the various concealments and discoveries of his person in several parts of that poem: but the crafty being I have now mentioned makes a much longer voyage than Ulysses, puts in practice many more wiles and stratagems, and hides himself under a greater variety of shapes and appearances, all of which are severally detected, to the great delight and surprise of the reader.

We may likewise observe with how much art the Poet has varied several characters of the persons that speak in his infernal assembly. On the contrary, how has he represented the whole Godhead exerting itself towards man, in its full benevolence, under the three-

fold distinction of a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Comforter!

Nor must we omit the person of Raphael, who, amidst his tenderness and friendship for man, shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speech and behaviour as are suitable to a superior nature. The angels are indeed as much diversified in Milton, and distinguished by their proper parts, as the gods are in Homer or Virgil. The reader will find nothing ascribed to Uriel, Gabriel, Michael, or Raphael, which is not in a particular manner suitable to their respective characters.

There is another circumstance in the principal actors of the Iliad and Æneid which gives a peculiar beauty to those two poems, and was therefore contrived with very great judgment; I mean the authors having chosen for their heroes persons who were so nearly related to the people for whom they wrote. Achilles was a Greek, and Æneas the remote founder of Rome: by this means their countrymen (whom they principally proposed to themselves for their readers) were particularly attentive to all the parts of their story, and sympathized with their heroes in all their adventures. A Roman could not but rejoice in the escapes, successes, and victories of Æneas, and be grieved at any defeats, misfortunes, or disappointments that befel him; as a Greek must have had the same regard for Achilles; and it is plain that each of those poems have

lost this great advantage, among those readers to whom their heroes are as strangers or indifferent persons.

Milton's Poem is admirable in this respect, since it is impossible for any of its readers, whatever nation, country, or people, he may belong to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in it; but what is still infinitely more to its advantage, the principal actors in this Poem are not only our progenitors, but our representatives: we have an actual interest in every thing they do, and no less than our utmost happiness is concerned, and lies at stake, in all their behaviour.

I shall subjoin, as a corollary to the foregoing remark, an admirable observation out of Aristotle, which hath been very much misrepresented in the quotations of some modern critics. 'If a man of perfect and complete virtue falls into a misfortune, it raises our pity, but not our terror; because we do not fear that it may be our own case, who do not resemble the suffering person:' but, as that great philosopher adds, 'If we see a man of virtue, mixt with infirmities, fall into any misfortune, it does not only raise our pity but our terror; because we are afraid that the like misfortunes may happen to ourselves, who resemble the character of the suffering person.'

I shall only remark in this place, that the foregoing observation of Aristotle, though it may be true in other occasions, does not hold in this; because in the

present case, though the persons who fall into misfortune are of the most perfect and consummate virtue, it is not to be considered as what may possibly be, but what actually is, our own case, since we are embarked with them on the same bottom, and must be partakers of their happiness or misery.

In this, and some other very few instances, Aristotle's rules for epic poetry, which he had drawn from his reflections upon Homer, cannot be supposed to square exactly with the heroic poems which have been made since his time, since it is evident to every impartial judge his rules would still have been more perfect could he have perused the *Æneid*, which was made some hundred years after his death.

We have already taken a general survey of the fable and characters in Milton's *Paradise Lost*: the parts which remain to be considered, according to Aristotle's method, are the Sentiments and the Language. Before I enter upon the first of these, I must advertise my reader that it is my design, as soon as I have finished my general reflections on these four several heads, to give particular instances out of the Poem now before us of beauties and imperfections which may be observed under each of them, as also of such other particulars as may not properly fall under any of them. This I thought fit to premise, that the reader may not judge too hastily of this piece of Criticism, or look upon it as imperfect, before he has seen the whole extent of it.

The Sentiments, in an epic poem, are the thoughts and behaviour which the author ascribes to the persons whom he introduces, and are just, when they are conformable to the characters of the several persons. The Sentiments have likewise a relation to things as well as persons, and are then perfect when they are such as are adapted to the subject. If in either of these cases the poet endeavours to argue or explain, to magnify or diminish, to raise love or hatred, pity or terror, or any other passion, we ought to consider whether the Sentiments he makes use of are proper for those ends. Homer is censured by the critics for his defect as to this particular in several parts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, though, at the same time, those who have treated this great poet with candour, have attributed this defect to the times in which he lived. It was the fault of the age, and not of Homer, if there wants that delicacy in some of his sentiments which now appears in the works of men of a much inferior genius. Besides, if there are blemishes in any particular thoughts, there is an infinite beauty in the greatest part of them. In short, if there are many poets who would not have fallen into the meanness of some of his sentiments, there are none who could have risen up to the greatness of others. Virgil has excelled all others in the propriety of his sentiments. Milton shines likewise very much in this particular: nor must we omit one consideration which adds to his honour

and reputation. Homer and Virgil introduced persons whose characters are commonly known among men, and such as are to be met with either in history or in ordinary conversation. Milton's characters, most of them, lie out of nature, and were to be formed purely by his own invention. It shows a greater genius in Shakespeare to have drawn his Caliban than his Hotspur or Julius Cæsar: the one was to be supplied out of his own imagination, whereas the other might have been formed upon tradition, history and observation. It was much easier, therefore, for Homer to find proper sentiments for an assembly of Grecian generals, than for Milton to diversify his infernal council with proper characters, and inspire them with a variety of sentiments. The loves of Dido and Æneas are only copies of what has passed between other persons. Adam and Eve before the fall are a different species from that of mankind, who are descended from them; and none but a poet of the most unbounded invention, and the most exquisite judgment, could have filled their conversation and behaviour with so many apt circumstances during their state of innocence.

Nor is it sufficient for an epic poem to be filled with such thoughts as are natural, unless it abound also with such as are sublime. Virgil in this particular falls short of Homer. He has not indeed so many thoughts that are low and vulgar; but at the same time has not so many thoughts that are sublime and noble. The truth of it is, Virgil seldom rises into very asto-

nishing sentiments where he is not fired by the Iliad : he every where charms and pleases us by the force of his own genius, but seldom elevates and transports us where he does not fetch his hints from Homer.

Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the Moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his Sentiments he triumphs over all the poets, both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas than those which he has laid together in his First, Second, and Sixth Books. The Seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, tho' not so apt to stir up emotion in the mind of the reader, nor, consequently, so perfect in the epic way of writing; because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare what Longinus has observed on several passages in Homer, and he will find parallels for most of them in the Paradise Lost.

From what has been said we may infer, that as there are two kinds of Sentiments, the natural and the sublime, which are always to be pursued in an heroic poem, there are also two kinds of thoughts which are carefully to be avoided. The first are such as are affected and unnatural, the second such as are mean and vulgar. As for the first kind of thoughts, we meet with little or nothing that is like them in Virgil; he has none of those trifling points and puerilities that are

so often to be met with in Ovid, none of the epigrammatic turns of Lucan, none of those swelling sentiments which are so frequently in Statius and Claudian, none of those mixed embellishments of Tasso. Every thing is just and natural. His Sentiments shew that he had a perfect insight into human nature, and that he knew every thing which was the most proper to affect it.

Mr. Dryden has in some places, which I may hereafter take notice of, misrepresented Virgil's way of thinking as to this particular, in the translation he has given us of the *Æneid*. I do not remember that Homer any where falls into the faults above mentioned, which were indeed the false refinements of later ages. Milton, it must be confess'd, has sometimes erred in this respect, as I shall shew more at large in another paper; though, considering all the poets of the age in which he writ were infected with this wrong way of thinking, he is rather to be admired that he did not give more into it, than that he did sometimes comply with the vicious taste which still prevails so much among modern writers.

But since several thoughts may be natural which are low and groveling, an epic poet should not only avoid such sentiments as are unnatural or affected, but also such as are mean and vulgar. Homer has opened a great field of raillery to men of more delicacy than greatness of genius, by the homeliness of some of his sentiments: but, as I have before said,

these are rather to be imputed to the simplicity of the age in which he lived, to which I may also add, of that which he described, than to any imperfection in that divine poet. Zoilus among the Ancients, and Monsieur Perrault among the Moderns, pushed their ridicule very far upon him, on account of some such sentiments. There is no blemish to be observed in Virgil under this head, and but a very few in Milton.

I shall give but one instance of this impropriety of thought in Homer, and at the same time compare it with an instance of the same nature both in Virgil and Milton. Sentiments which raise laughter can very seldom be admitted with any decency into an heroic poem, whose business is to excite passions of a much nobler nature. Homer, however, in his characters of Vulcan and Thersites, in his history of Mars and Venus, in his behaviour of Irus, and in other passages, has been observed to have lapsed into the burlesque character, and to have departed from that serious air which seems essential to the magnificence of an epic poem. I remember but one laugh in the whole *Æneid*, which rises in the Fifth Book upon Monætes, where he is represented as thrown over-board, and drying himself upon a rock. But this piece of mirth is so well timed, that the severest critic can have nothing to say against it, for it is in the book of Games and Diversions, where the reader's mind may be supposed to be sufficiently relaxed for such an entertainment. The only piece of pleasantry in *Paradise Lost*, is where the

evil spirits are described as rallying the angels upon the success of their new invented artillery. This passage I look upon to be the most exceptionable in the whole Poem, as being nothing else but a string of puns, and those, too, very indifferent.

..... Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.
O Friends, why come not on these victors proud!
Ere while they fierce were coming, and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front,
And breast, (what could we more) propounded terms
Of composition; straight they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dapce, yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace; but I suppose
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood.
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many; who receives them right
Had need, from head to foot, well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.
Thus they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing

Having already treated of the Fable, the Characters and Sentiments in the Paradise Lost, we are, in the last place, to consider the Language; and as the learned world is very much divided upon Milton as to this point, I hope they will excuse me if I appear particular in any of my opinions, and incline to those who judge the most advantageously of the Author.

It is requisite that the Language of an heroic poem

should be both perspicuous and sublime. In proportion as either of these two qualities are wanting the Language is imperfect. Perspicuity is the first and most necessary qualification; insomuch that a good-natured reader sometimes overlooks a little slip even in the grammar or syntax, where it is impossible for him to mistake the poet's sense. Of this kind is that passage in Milton wherein he speaks of Satan,

..... God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valu'd he nor shunn'd.

And that in which he describes Adam and Eve.

Adam the goodliest man of men sincee born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

It is plain that, in the former of these passages, according to the natural syntax, the divine persons mentioned in the first line are represented as created beings; and that in the other, Adam and Eve are confounded with their sons and daughters. Such little blemishes as these, when the thought is great and natural, we should, with Horace, impute to a pardonable inadvertency, or to the weakness of human nature, which cannot attend to each minute particular, and give the last finishing to every circumstance in so long a work. The ancient critics, therefore, who were acted by a spirit of candour rather than that of cavilling, invented certain figures of speech on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature in the writings of those authors who had so many greater beauties to atone for them.

If clearness and perspicuity were only to be consulted, the poet would have nothing else to do but to clothe his thoughts in the most plain and natural expressions. But since it often happens that the most obvious phrases, and those which are used in ordinary conversation, become too familiar to the ear, and contract a kind of meanness by passing through the mouths of the vulgar, a poet should take particular care to guard himself against idiomatic ways of speaking. Ovid and Lucan have many poornesses of expression upon this account, as taking up with the first phrases that offered, without putting themselves to the trouble of looking after such as would not only be natural, but also elevated and sublime. Milton has but a few failings in this kind, of which, however, you may meet with some instances, as in the following passages.

Embrios and idiots, eremites and friers
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery,
Here pilgrims roam---

----- A while discourse they hold,
No fear left dinner cool ; when thus began
Our author-----

Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me will curse
My head, ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam,-----

The great masters in composition know very well that many an elegant phrase becomes improper for a poet or an orator when it has been debased by common use. For this reason the works of ancient authors,

which are written in dead languages, have a great advantage over those which are written in languages that are now spoken. Were there any mean phrases or idioms in Virgil and Homer, they would not shock the ear of the most delicate modern reader so much as they would have done that of an old Greek or Roman, because we never hear them pronounced in our streets, or in ordinary conversation.

It is not therefore sufficient that the Language of an epic poem be perspicuous, unless it be also sublime. To this end it ought to deviate from the common forms and ordinary phrases of speech. The judgment of a poet very much discovers itself in shunning the common roads of expression, without falling into such ways of speech as may seem stiff and unnatural; he must not swell into a false sublime, by endeavouring to avoid the other extreme. Among the Greeks Æschylus, and sometimes Sophocles, were guilty of this fault; among the Latins Claudian and Statius; and among our own countrymen Shakespeare and Lee. In these authors the affectation of greatness often hurts the perspicuity of the style, as in many others the endeavour after perspicuity prejudices its greatness.

Aristotle has observed, that the idiomatic style may be avoided, and the sublime formed, by the following methods. First, by the use of metaphors: such are those in Milton.

Imparadi'd in one another's arms.

Volume I.

E

-----And in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipt with fire----- !
 The grassy clods now calv'd-----
 Spangled with eyes-----

In these, and innumerable other instances, the metaphors are very bold, but just; I must, however, observe, that the metaphors are not thick sown in Milton, which always favours too much of wit; that they never clash with one another, which, as Aristotle observes, turns a sentence into a kind of enigma or riddle; and that he seldom has recourse to them where the proper and natural words will do as well.

Another way of raising the Language, and giving it a poetical turn, is to make use of the idioms of other tongues. Virgil is full of the Greek forms of speech, which the critics call Hellenisms, as Horace, in his odes, abounds with them much more than Virgil. I need not mention the several dialects which Homer has made use of for this end. Milton, in conformity with the practice of the ancient poets, and with Aristotle's rule, has infused a great many Latinisms as well as Græcisms, and sometimes Hebraisms, into the language of his Poem; as towards the beginning of it;

Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel.
 Yet to their gen'ral's voice they soon obey'd.
 -----Who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
 The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast abrupt !
 -----So both ascend
 In the visions of God-----

B. xi.

Under this head may be reckoned the placing the adjective after the substantive, the transposition of words, the turning the adjective into a substantive, with several other foreign modes of speech, which this Poet has naturalized to give his verse the greater sound, and throw it out of prose.

The third method mentioned by Aristotle is what agrees with the genius of the Greek language more than with that of any other tongue, and is therefore more used by Homer than by any other poet; I mean the lengthening of a phrase by the addition of words which may either be inserted or omitted, as also by the extending or contracting of particular words, by the insertion or omission of certain syllables. Milton has put in practice this method of raising his language, as far as the nature of our tongue will permit, as in the passage above mentioned, *eremite*, for what is hermite, in common discourse. If you observe the measure of his verse, he has with great judgment suppressed a syllable in several words, and shortened those of two syllables into one, by which method, besides the above-mentioned advantage, he has given a greater variety to his numbers: but this practice is more particularly remarkable in the names of persons and of countries, as *Beëlzebub*, *Hefsebon*, and in many other particulars, wherein he has either changed the name, or made use of that which is not the most commonly known, that he might the better depart from the language of the vulgar.

E ij

The same reason recommended to him several old words, which also makes his Poem appear the more venerable, and gives it a greater air of antiquity.

I must likewise take notice that there are in Milton several words of his own coining, as *Cerberous*, *mis-created*, *hell-doom'd*, *embryon* atoms, and many others. If the reader is offended at this liberty in our English poet, I would recommend him to a discourse in Plutarch, which shows us how frequently Homer has made use of the same liberty.

Milton, by the above-mentioned helps, and by the choice of the noblest words and phrases which our tongue would afford him, has carried our Language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him, and made the sublimity of his Style equal to that of his Sentiments.

I have been the more particular in these observations on Milton's Style, because it is that part of him in which he appears the most singular. The remarks I have here made upon the practice of other poets, with my observations out of Aristotle, will perhaps alleviate the prejudice which some have taken to his Poem upon this account; though, after all, I must confess that I think his Style, though admirable in general, is in some places too much stiffened and obscured by the frequent use of those methods which Aristotle has prescribed for the raising of it.

This redundancy of those several ways of speech, which Aristotle calls Foreign Language, and with which

Milton has so very much enriched, and in some places darkened, the language of his Poem, was the more proper for his use, because his Poem is written in blank verse. Rhyme, without any other assistance, throws the language off from prose, and very often makes an indifferent phrase pass unregarded; but where the verse is not built upon rhymes, there pomp of sound, and energy of expression, are indispensably necessary to support the style, and keep it from falling into the flatness of prose.

Those who have not a taste for this elevation of Style, and are apt to ridicule a poet when he goes out of the common forms of expression, would do well to see how Aristotle has treated an ancient author, called Euclid, for his insipid mirth upon this occasion. Mr. Dryden used to call this sort of men his prose critics.

I should, under this head of the Language, consider Milton's Numbers, in which he has made use of several elisions that are not customary among other English poets, as may be particularly observed in his cutting off the letter *L*, when it precedes a vowel. This, and some other innovations in the measure of his verse, has varied his Numbers in such a manner as makes them incapable of satiating the ear and cloying the reader, which the same uniform measure would certainly have done, and which the perpetual returns of rhyme never fail to do in long narrative poems. I shall close these reflections upon the Language of Pa-

Paradise Lost, with observing that Milton has copied after Homer, rather than Virgil, in the length of his periods, the copiousness of his phrases, and the running of his verses into one another.

I have now considered Milton's Paradise Lost under those four great heads of the Fable, the Characters, the Sentiments, and the Language, and have shown that he excels, in general, under each of these heads. I hope that I have made several discoveries which may appear new, even to those who are versed in critical learning. Were I, indeed, to chuse my readers, by whose judgment I would stand or fall, they should not be such as are acquainted only with the French and Italian critics, but also with the Ancient and Modern who have written in either of the learned languages. Above all, I would have them well versed in the Greek and Latin poets, without which a man very often fancies that he understands a critic, when in reality he does not comprehend his meaning.

It is in criticism as in all other sciences and speculations; one who brings with him any implicit notions and observations which he has made in his reading of the poets, will find his own reflections methodized and explained, and, perhaps, several little hints that had passed in his mind perfected and improved in the works of a good critic; whereas one who has not these previous lights is very often an utter stranger to what he reads, and apt to put a wrong interpretation upon it.

Nor is it sufficient that a man who sets up for a

judge in criticism should have perused the authors above mentioned, unless he has also a clear and logical head. Without this talent he is perpetually puzzled and perplexed amidst his own blunders, mistakes the sense of those he would confute, or, if he chances to think right, does not know how to convey his thoughts to another with clearness and perspicuity. Aristotle, who was the best critic, was also one of the best logicians that ever appeared in the world.

Mr. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding would be thought a very odd book for a man to make himself master of who would get a reputation by critical writings; though, at the same time, it is very certain that an author who has not learned the art of distinguishing between words and things, and of ranging his thoughts, and setting them in proper lights, whatever notions he may have, will lose himself in confusion and obscurity. I might further observe, that there is not a Greek or Latin critic who has not shown, even in the style of his criticisms, that he was a master of the elegance and delicacy of his native tongue.

The truth of it is, there is nothing more absurd than for a man to set up for a critic without a good insight into all the parts of learning; whereas many of those who have endeavoured to signalize themselves by works of this nature among our English writers, are not only defective in the above-mentioned particulars, but plainly discover, by the phrases which they make use of, and by their confused way of thinking,

that they are not acquainted with the most common and ordinary systems of arts and sciences. A few general rules extracted out of the French authors, with a certain cant of words, has sometimes set up an illiterate heavy writer for a most judicious and formidable critic.

One great mark by which you may discover a critic who has neither taste nor learning is this, that he seldom ventures to praise any passage in an author which has not been before received and applauded by the public, and that his criticism turns wholly upon little faults and errors. This part of a critic is so very easy to succeed in, that we find every ordinary reader, upon the publishing of a new poem, has wit and ill-nature enough to turn several passages of it into ridicule, and very often in the right place. This Mr. Dryden has very agreeably remarked in those two celebrated lines,

Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
He who would search for pearls must dive below.

A true critic ought to dwell rather upon excellencies than imperfections to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and communicate to the world such things as are worth their observation. The most exquisite words and finest strokes of an author are those which very often appear the most doubtful and exceptionable to a man who wants a relish for polite learning; and they are these which a sour undistinguishing critic generally attacks with the greatest violence. Tully

observes, that it is very easy to brand or fix a mark upon what he calls *verbum ardens*, or, as it may be rendered into English, a glowing, bold expression, and to turn it into ridicule by a cold, ill-natured criticism. A little wit is equally capable of exposing a beauty and of aggravating a fault; and though such a treatment of an author naturally produces indignation in the mind of an understanding reader, it has, however, its effect among the generality of those whose hands it falls into, the rabble of mankind being very apt to think that every thing which is laughed at with any mixture of wit is ridiculous in itself.

Such a mirth as this is always unseasonable in a critic, as it rather prejudices the reader than convinces him, and is capable of making a beauty as well as a blemish the subject of derision. A man who cannot write with wit on a proper subject is dull and stupid; but one who shows it in an improper place is as impertinent and absurd. Besides, a man who has the gift of ridicule is apt to find fault with any thing that gives him an opportunity of exerting his beloved talent, and very often censures a passage, not because there is any fault in it, but because he can be merry upon it. Such kinds of pleasantries are very unfair and disingenuous in works of criticism, in which the greatest masters, both ancient and modern, have always appeared with a serious and instructive air.

As I intend, in my next paper, to show the defects in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I thought fit to premise

these few particulars, to the end that the reader may know I enter upon it as on a very ungrateful work, and that I shall just point at the imperfections, without endeavouring to inflame them with ridicule. I must also observe with Longinus, that the productions of a great genius, with many lapses and inadvertencies, are infinitely preferable to the works of an inferior kind of author, which are scrupulously exact, and conformable to all the rules of correct writing.

I shall conclude my paper with a story out of Boccacini, which sufficiently shows us the opinion that judicious author entertained of the sort of critics I have been here mentioning. A famous critic, says he, having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat as it had been just threshed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critic applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and, after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains.

After what I have said, I shall enter on the subject without farther preface, and remark the several defects which appear in the Fable, the Characters, the Sentiments, and the Language, of Milton's Paradise

Lost; not doubting but the reader will pardon me if I alledge, at the same time, whatever may be said for the extenuation of such defects. The first imperfection which I shall observe in the Fable is, that the event of it is unhappy.

The fable of every poem is, according to Aristotle's division, either simple or implex. It is called simple, when there is no change of fortune in it; implex, when the fortune of the chief actor changes from bad to good, or from good to bad. The implex fable is thought the most perfect; I suppose because it is more proper to stir up the passions of the reader, and to surprise him with a greater variety of accidents.

The implex fable is therefore of two kinds. In the first, the chief actor makes his way through a long series of dangers and difficulties, till he arrives at honour and prosperity; as we see in the story of Ulysses. In the second, the chief actor in the poem falls from some eminent pitch of honour and prosperity into misery and disgrace. Thus we see Adam and Eve sinking from a state of innocence and happiness into the most abject condition of sin and sorrow.

The most taking tragedies among the Ancients were built on this last sort of implex fable, particularly the tragedy of Oedipus, which proceeds upon a story, if we may believe Aristotle, the most proper for tragedy that could be invented by the wit of man. I have taken some pains, in a former paper, to show that this kind of implex fable, wherein the event is

unhappy, is more apt to affect an audience than that of the first kind; notwithstanding many excellent pieces among the Ancients, as well as most of those which have been written of late years in our own country, are raised upon contrary plans. I must, however, own that I think this kind of fable, which is the most perfect in tragedy, is not so proper for an heroic poem.

Milton seems to have been sensible of this imperfection in his Fable, and has therefore endeavoured to cure it by several expedients; particularly by the mortification which the great adversary of mankind meets with upon his return to the assembly of infernal spirits, as it is described in a beautiful passage of the Tenth Book; and likewise by the vision wherein Adam, at the close of the Poem, sees his offspring triumphing over his great enemy, and himself restored to a happier paradise than that from which he fell; *but*

There is another objection against Milton's Fable, which is indeed almost the same with the former, though placed in a different light, namely, that the hero in the Paradise Lost is unsuccessful; and by no means a match for his enemies. This gave occasion to Mr. Dryden's reflection, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. I think I have obviated this objection in my first paper. The Paradise Lost is an epic or a narrative poem, and he that looks for an hero in it searches for that which Milton never intended; but if he will needs fix the name of an hero upon any person in it, 'tis certainly the Messiah is the

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hero, both in the principal action, and in the chief episodes. Paganism could not furnish out a real action for a fable greater than that of the Iliad or Æneid, and therefore an Heathen could not form a higher notion of a poem than one of that kind which they call an Heroic. Whether Milton's is not of a sublimer nature I will not presume to determine: it is sufficient that I show there is in the Paradise Lost all the greatness of plan, regularity of design, and masterly beauties which we discover in Homer and Virgil.

I must, in the next place, observe that Milton has interwoven in the texture of his Fable some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epic poem, particularly in the actions which he ascribes to Sin and Death, and the picture which he draws of the Limbo of Vanity, with other passages in the Second Book. Such allegories rather savour of the spirit of Spenser and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil.

In the structure of this Poem he has likewise admitted of too many digressions. It is finely observed by Aristotle, that the author of an heroic poem should seldom speak himself, but throw as much of his work as he can into the mouths of those who are his principal actors. Aristotle has given no reason for this precept; but I presume it is because the mind of the reader is more awed and elevated when he hears Æneas or Achilles speak, than when Virgil or Homer talk

in their own persons : besides that, assuming the character of an eminent man is apt to fire the imagination, and raise the ideas of the author. Tully tells us, mentioning his Dialogue of Old Age, in which Cato is the chief speaker, that upon a review of it he was agreeably imposed upon, and fancied that it was Cato, and not he himself, who uttered his thoughts on that subject.

If the reader would be at the pains to see how the story of the Iliad and Æneid is delivered by those persons who act in it, he will be surpris'd to find how little in either of these poems proceeds from the authors : Milton has, in the general disposition of his Fable, very finely observed this great rule ; inasmuch that there is scarce a third part of it which comes from the Poet : the rest is spoken either by Adam and Eve, or by some good or evil spirit who is engaged either in their destruction or defense.

From what has been here observed it appears that digressions are by no means to be allowed of in an epic poem. If the poet, even in the ordinary course of his narration, should speak as little as possible, he should certainly never let his narration sleep for the sake of any reflections of his own. I have often observed, with a secret admiration, that the longest reflection in the Æneid is in that passage of the Tenth Book, where Turnus is represented as dressing himself in the spoils of Pallas whom he had slain. Virgil here lets his fable stand still for the sake of the following

remark; 'How is the mind of men ignorant of futurity, and unable to bear prosperous fortune with moderation? The time will come when Turnus shall wish that he had left the body of Pallas untouched, and curse the day on which he dressed himself in these spoils.' As the great event of the *Æneid*, and the death of Turnus, whom *Æneas* slew, because he saw him adorned with the spoils of Pallas, turns upon this incident, Virgil went out of his way to make this reflection upon it, without which so small a circumstance might possibly have slipped out of his reader's memory. Lucan, who was an injudicious poet, lets drop his story very frequently for the sake of his unnecessary digressions, or his *diverticula*, as Scaliger calls them. If he gives us an account of the prodigies which preceded the Civil war, he declaims upon the occasion, and shows how much happier it would be for man if he did not feel his evil fortune before it comes to pass, and suffer not only by its real weight, but by the apprehension of it. Milton's complaint of his blindness, his panegyric on marriage, his reflections on Adam and Eve's going naked, of the angels eating, and several other passages in his Poem, are liable to the same exception, though, I must confess, there is so great a beauty in these very digressions that I would not wish them out of his Poem.

I have, in a former paper, spoken of the characters of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and declared my opinion as to the allegorical persons who are introduced in it.

If we look into the Sentiments, I think they are sometimes defective under the following heads. First; as there are several of them too much pointed, and some that degenerate even into puns. Of this last kind I am afraid is that in the First Book, where, speaking of the pigmies, he calls them

-----the finall infantry
Warr'd on by cranes-----

Another blemish that appears in some of his thoughts is his frequent allusion to heathen fables, which are not certainly of a piece with the divine subject of which he treats. I do not find fault with these allusions, where the Poet himself represents them as fabulous, as he does in some places, but where he mentions them as truths and matters of fact. The limits of my paper will not give me leave to be particular in instances of this kind; the reader will easily remark them in his perusal of the Poem.

A third fault in his Sentiments is an unnecessary ostentation of learning, which likewise occurs very frequently. It is certain that both Homer and Virgil were masters of all the learning of their times, but it shows itself in their works after an indirect and concealed manner. Milton seems ambitious of letting us know, by his excursions on free will and predestination, and his many glances upon history, astronomy, geography, and the like, as well as by the terms and phrases he sometimes makes use of, that he was acquainted with the whole circle of arts and sciences,

If, in the last place, we consider the Language of this great Poet, we must allow what I have hinted in a former paper, that it is often too much labour-ed, and sometimes obscured by old words, transpo-sitions, and foreign idioms. Seneca's objection to the style of a great author, *Riget ejus oratio, nihil in ea placidum, nihil lenè*, is what many critics make to Milton. As I cannot wholly refute it, so I have already apologized for it in another paper; to which I may farther add, that Milton's sentiments and ideas were so wonderfully sublime, that it would have been impossible for him to have represented them in their full strength and beauty without having re-course to these foreign assistances. Our language sunk under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnished him with such glorious conceptions.

A second fault in his Language is, that he often affects a kind of jingle in his words, as in the following passages, and many others:

That brought into this world a world of woe.

----- Begirt th' almighty throne,

Beseeking or besieging-----

This tempted our attempt-----

At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound.

I know there are figures for this kind of speech; that some of the greatest Ancients have been guilty of it; and that Aristotle himself has given it a place in his Rhetoric among the beauties of that art: but as it is in itself poor and trifling, it is, I think, at

present, universally exploded by all the masters of polite writing.

The last fault which I shall take notice of in Milton's Style, is the frequent use of what the learned call technical words, or terms of art. It is one of the great beauties of poetry to make hard things intelligible, and to deliver what is abstruse of itself in such easy language as may be understood by ordinary readers: besides that the knowledge of a poet should rather seem born with him, or inspired, than drawn from books and systems. I have often wondered how Mr. Dryden could translate a passage out of Virgil after the following manner,

Tack to the larboard, and stand off to sea,
Veer starboard sea and land-----

Milton makes use of larboard in the same manner. When he is upon building, he mentions Doric pillars, pilasters, cornice, freeze, architrave. When he talks of heavenly bodies, you meet with ecliptic and eccentric, the trepidation, stars dropping from the zenith, rays culminating from the equator. To which might be added many instances of the like kind in several other arts and sciences.

I shall, in my next papers, give an account of the many particular beauties in Milton, which would have been too long to insert under those general heads I have already treated of, and with which I intend to conclude this piece of Criticism.

I have seen in the works of a modern philosopher a map of the spots in the sun. My last paper of the faults and blemishes in Milton's *Paradise Lost* may be considered as a piece of the same nature. To pursue the allusion; as it is observed that among the bright parts of the luminous body above mentioned there are some which glow more intensely, and dart a stronger light than others; so, notwithstanding I have already shown Milton's poem to be very beautiful in general, I shall now proceed to take notice of such beauties as appear to me more exquisite than the rest *.

* This he accordingly did in twelve different papers in the *Spectator*.

PARADISUM AMISSAM

SUMMI POETÆ

JOHANNIS MILTONI.

QUI legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni
 Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
 Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
 Et fata, et fines continet iste liber.
 Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi, 5
 Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:
 Terræque, tractusque maris, cælumque profundum,
 Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomumque specus:
 Quæque colunt terras, pontumque, et Tartara cæca,
 Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli: 10
 Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam,
 Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus:
 Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
 In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.
 Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futura? 15
 Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britannia legit.
 O quantos in bella duces! quæ protulit arma!
 Quæ canit, et quanta prælia dira tuba!
 Cælestes acies! atque in certamine cælum!
 Et quæ cælestes pugna deceret agros! 20

Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis!
 Atque ipso graditur vix Michael minor!
 Quantis, et quam funestis concurritur iris,
 Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!
 Dum vulfos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent, 25
 Et non mortali desuper igne pluuunt:
 Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
 Et metuit pugnae non superesse suae.
 At simul in cœlis Messiae insignia fulgent,
 Et currus animes, armaque digna Deo, 30
 Horrendumque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum
 Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
 Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco
 Admistis flammis insonuere polo:
 Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis, 35
 Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
 Ad pœnas fugiunt, et ceu foret Orcus asylum,
 Infernis certant condere se tenebris.
 Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii,
 Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus. 40
 Hæc quicumque leget tantum cecinisse putabit.
 Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

SAMUEL BARROW, M. D.

ON PARADISE LOST.

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In slender book his vast design unfold,
Messiah crown'd, God's reconcil'd decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heaven, hell, earth, chaos, all; the argument 5
Held me a while misdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
The sacred truths to fable and old song;
(So Sampson grop'd the temple's posts in spite)
The world o'erwhelming to revenge his sight. 10

Yet as I read, still growing less severe,
I lik'd his project, the success did fear,
Through that wide field how he his way should find,
O'er which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;
Left he perplex'd the things he would explain, 15
And what was easy he should render vain.

Or if a work so infinite he spann'd,
Jealous I was, that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill imitating would excel) 20
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty Poet! nor despise
My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.
But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare 25
Within thy labours to pretend a share.

Thou hast not mis'd one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper dost omit :
So that no room is here for writers left,
But to detect their ignorance or theft. 30

That majesty which through thy Work doth reign,
Draws the devout, deterring the profane :
And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
At once delight and horror on us seize, 35
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease ;
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft ;
The bird nam'd from that Paradise you sing
So never flags, but always keeps on wing. 40

Where could'st thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expense of mind ?
Just Heav'n thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
Rewards with prophesy thy loss of sight.

Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure 45
With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure ;
While the Town-Bays writes all the while and spells,
And like a pack-horse tires without his bells :
Their fancies like our bushy points appear,
The poets tag them we for fashion wear. 50
I too, transported by the mode, offend,
And while I meant to praise thee, must commend.
Thy verse, created, like thy theme, sublime,
In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme.

ANDREW MARVEL.

THE VERSE.

THE measure is English heroic verse without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rime being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame meter; grac'd indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part, worse than else they would have express'd them. Not without cause, therefore, some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rime both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned Ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then, of rime, so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

The Argument.

This First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was plac'd: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great Deep. Which action pass'd over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now falling into Hell, describ'd here, not in the center (for Heaven and Earth may be suppos'd as yet not made, certainly not yet accus'd) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest call'd Chaos: here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonish'd, after a certain space recovers as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: they rise, their numbers, array of battel, their chief leaders nam'd, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them, lastly, of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the Deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,

Volume I.

G

Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd, who first taught the Chosen Seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion hill 10
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracke of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,
That with no middle slight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spi'rit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread 20
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumin, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence, 25
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off 30
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?

'Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35
The Mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory' above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High, 40
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battel proud
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky, 45
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantin chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night 50
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: but his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain 55
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
'That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once, as far as angels' ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild; 60
A dungeon horrible on all sides round

As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where Peace 65
And Rest can never dwell, Hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd :
Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
For those rebellious, here their pris'on ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and wett'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-enemy,
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou bee'st he; but O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of Light 85
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,

Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
In equal ru'in : into what pit thou seest
From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder : and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms ? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage 95
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along 100
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battel on the plains of Heav'n,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; th' unconquerable will, 106
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome ;
That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire ; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy' and shame beneath 115
This downfal ; since by fate the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail,

Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve 120
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heav'n.

So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain, 125
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many throned powers,
That led th' imbattel'd seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130
Fearless, indanger'd Heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat 135
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spi'rit remains
Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140
Though all our glory' extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less 144
Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours)

Have left us this our spi'rit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his bus'ness be, 150
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep ;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminis'd, or eternal being
'To undergo eternal punishment ? 155

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering : but of this be sure,
'To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
As be'ing the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil; 165
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see the angry Victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
Back to the gates of Heav'n : the sulph'rous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice

Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
The seat of Desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
There rest, if any rest can harbour there, 185
And re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope, 190
If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large 195
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
Leviathan, which God of all his works



BELL'S EDITION.
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN
COMPLETE FROM
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



MILTON VOLUME I.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Alott, incumbent on the dusky Air.

From Milton's Paradise Lost.

Martin del.

Bell sculp.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London Nov: 30th 1777.

Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream :
Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam
'The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell, 205
With fixed anchor in his skaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays :
So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence 210
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. 220
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;

And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring *Ætna*, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
And leave a sing'd bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
Not by the suff'rance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Arch-angel, this the seat
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be' it so, since he 245
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reas'on hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewel happy fields,
Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail Horrors, hail 250
Infernal World, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of Hell, a hell of Heav'n. 255
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he

Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: 260
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
'Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
Was moving tow'ard the shore; his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, 285

Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps 295
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heav'n's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire:
Nathless he so indur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
His legions, angel forms, who lay intranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd imbow'r; or scatter'd sedge
Aflote, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Bustis and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases 310
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.

He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates, 315
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n; once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spi'rits; or have ye chos'n this place
After the toil of battel to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
'To' adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325
His swift pursuers from Heav'n gates discern
'Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n. 330

'They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,

That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell 345
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 350
A multitude, like which the populous North
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barb'rous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands. 355
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander; godlike shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And pow'rs that erst in Heaven sat on thrones; 360
Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
By their rebellion from the books of Life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve 364
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,
'Through God's high suff'rance for the tri'al of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible

Glory of him that made them to transform 370
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities :
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the Heathen world. 375
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great Emp'ror's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof. 380
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide 385
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite 396
Worshipt in Rabba and her watry plain,

In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell. 405
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410
And Eleälé to th' Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd 415
Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Bälilim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These feminine. For spirits when they please
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure, 425

Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumb'rous flesh; but in what shape they chuse
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes, 430
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low 435
Bow'd down in battel, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarte, queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,
In Sion also not unfung, where stood
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,

Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led 455
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers :
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish : yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, 465
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharpar, lucid streams.
He also' against the house of God was bold : 470
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods 475
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew who under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
Their wand'ring gods disguis'd in brutish forms

Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spi'rit more lew'd 490
Fell not from Heav'n, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns Atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when Night 500
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape. 505
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than heav'n and earth,

Their boasted parents : Titan Heav'n's first-born,
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seisd 511
 By younger Saturn ; he from mightier Jove
 His own and Rhea's son like measure found ;
 So Jove usurping reign'd : these first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top 515
 Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest heav'n ; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land ; or who with Saturn old
 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields, 520
 And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking ; but with looks
 Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to' have found their chief
 Not in despair, to' have found themselves not lost
 In loss itself ; which on his countenance cast 526
 Like doubtful hue : but he his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth not substance, gently rais'd
 Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
 Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
 His mighty standard : that proud honor clam'd
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall ; 534
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
 Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc'd
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,

With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds : 540
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545
With orient colors waving : with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable : anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
Of flutes and soft recorder; such as rais'd
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battel, and instead of rage
Deliberate valor breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ; 555
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and 'swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow' and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force with fixed thought 560
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanc'd in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565

Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
 Had to impose: he through the armed files
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
 'The whole battalion views their order due,
 'Their visages and stature as of gods, 570
 'Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories: for never since created man
 Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575
 Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son 580
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebifond,
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread Commander: he above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent 590
 Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
 All her orig'inal brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than Arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess

Of glory' obscur'd; as when the Sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air 595
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-angel: but his face 600
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and Care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold 605
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung 610
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd 615
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth: at last 620
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O myriads of immortal Spi'rits, O Powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change 625
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
'That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me be witness all the host of Heav'n, 635
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state 640
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645
'To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650
'There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the sons of Heav'n :
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere :
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spi'rits in bondage, nor th' abyfs
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature : peace is despair'd, 660
For who can think submission ? War then, war
Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake : and to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim ; the sudden blaze 665
Far round illumin'd Hell : highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance tow'ard the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A numerous brigad hasten'd : as when bands 675
Of pioneers with spade and pickaxe arm'd
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,

Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected spi'rit that fell
From Heav'n, for e'en in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more 681
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
'Than ought divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685
Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribbs of gold. Let none admire 690
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame 695
And strength and art are easily out-done
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd, 700
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Seve'ring each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705

A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,
As in an organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want 715
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat 720
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately highth, and strait the doors
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth 725
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets fed
With Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heav'n by many a towered structure high,

Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes, whom the supreme King 735
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740
 From Heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star, 745
 On Lemnos th' Ægean ile: thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now
 To' have built in Heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engins, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean while the winged heralds by command
 Of sovran pow'r, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclame
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
 Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates, 761

By the Martins.

And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry 765
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
'The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
'Their state affairs. So thick the aery croud 775
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given,
Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780
Beyond the Indian mount, or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
Wheels her pale course, they on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spi'rits to smallest forms

Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
'Though without number still amidst the hall 791
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
'The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat 795
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then
And summons read, the great consult began,

The End of the First Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

The Argument.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battel he to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferr'd, mention'd before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honor'd and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations led them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are open'd, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
'To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heav'n, and by success untaught
His proud imaginations thus display'd. 10
Pow'rs and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold

Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for lost: From this descent
Celestial Virtues rising, will appear 15
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heav'n
Did first create your leader, next free choice,
With what besides, in counsel or in fight, 20
Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loss
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw 25
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? where there is then no good 30
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will clame in Hell
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then 35
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To clame our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way, 40

Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair: 45
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse
He reck'd not, and these words thereafter spake. 50

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait 55
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather chuse, 60
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Tort'rer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engin he shall hear 65
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels, and his throne itself

Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps 70
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benum not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend 75
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce Foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse 85
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the highth enrag'd, 95
Will either quite consume us, and reduce

To nothing this essential, happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being :
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
On this side nothing ; and by proof we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne :
Which if not victory is yet revenge. 105

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battel dangerous
To less than gods. On th' other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane ;
A fairer person lost not Heav'n ; he seem'd 110
For dignity compos'd and high exploit :
But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels : for his thoughts were low ; 115
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful : yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate ; if what was urg'd 120
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success :
When he who most excels in fact of arms,

In what he counsels and in what excels 125
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the towers of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access 130
Impregnable; oft on the bord'ring deep
Incamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise 135
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light, yet our great Enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould
Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. 'Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure, 145
'To be no more; sad cure; for who would lose,
'Though full of pain, this intellectual be'ing,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated Night, 150
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe

Can give it, or will ever? how he can
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck 165
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The Deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
Awak'd should blow them into sev'n-fold rage, 171
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted Vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180

Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of wracking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185
 Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? he from Heav'n's highth
 All these our motions vain sees and derides; 191
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd to suffer here 195
 Chains and these torments? better these than worse
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200
 That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And ventrous, if that fail them, shrink and fear 205
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror: this is now

Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme Foe in time may much remit 210
His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome 215
Their noxious vapor, or inur'd not feel,
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light, 220
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe. 225

Thus Belial with words cloth'd in Reason's garb
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthronè the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
Our own right lost: him to unthronè we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former vain to hope argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us 235
Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme

We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc'd halleluiahs; while he lordly sits
Our envied Sovran, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers, 245
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring 255
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of adverse
We can create, and in what place foe'er 260
Thrive under ev'il, and work ease out of pain
Through labor and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire

Chuse to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Must ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil 270
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements, these piercing fires 275
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may 280
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war: ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: for such another field

They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295
 'To found this nether empire, which might rise
 By policy, and long process of time,
 In emulation opposit to Heav'n,
 Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pill'ar of state; deep on his front ingraven
 Deliberation sat and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood 305
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

'Thrones and Imperial Pow'rs, offspring of Heav'n,
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now 310
 Must we renounce, and changing stile be call'd
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue', and build up here
 A growing empire; doubtless; while we dream, 315
 And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt 320
 From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne, but to remain 325

In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole King, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron scepter rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heav'n.
What fit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return 335
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dang'rous expedition to invade
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place, 345
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
Err not) another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd *Man*, about this time

To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favor'd more 350
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath
That shook Heav'n's whole circumference confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mold, 355
Or substance, how endu'd, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heav'n be shut,
And Heav'n's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd, 360
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it; here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset, either with Hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess 365
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants, or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss, 375
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth

Attempting, or to sit, in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence, 380
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of Mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves 385
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate, 390
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep,
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence with neighb'ring arms
And opportune excursion we may chance 396
Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light,
Secure, and at the brightning orient beam
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air, 400
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet

The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss, 405
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy ile? what strength, what art can then
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe 411
 Through the strict senteries and stations thick
 Of angels watching round? Here he had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send, 415
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
 Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In others count'nance read his own dismay
 Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
 Of those Heav'n-warring champions could be found
 So hardy as to proffer or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchical pride
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones, 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seis'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way

And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round 435
Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers, 445
And this imperial sovranty, adorn'd
With splendor, arm'd with power, if ought propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty' or danger could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do' I assume 450
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honor, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
High honor'd sits? Go therefore mighty Powers,
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
'The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460

To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark Destruction seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise 465
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply,
Prudent, lest from his resolution rais'd
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd; 470
And so refus'd might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose; 475
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow'ards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heav'n:
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
That for the general safety he despis'd 481
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds

Ascending, while the North-wind sleeps, o'er-spread
Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element 490
Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace: and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait. 505

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
In order came the grand infernal Peers:
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of Heav'n, nor less
Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme, 510
And God-like imitated state; him round
A globe of fiery seraphim inclos'd
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets' regal sound the great result: 515
Tow'ards the four winds four speedy cherubim

Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy
By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow' abyfs
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell 519
With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud aeclame.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find 525
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields; 539
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
As when to warn proud cities war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battel in the clouds, before each van 535
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.
Others with vast Typhæan rage more fell
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,

And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battel; and complain that Fate 550
Free virtue should inthral to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when spi'rits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet 555
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,)
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, 560
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory' and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part in squadrons and gross bands, 570
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps

Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon, 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe the river of oblivion rolls
 Her watry labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and be'ing forgets, 585
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire. 595
 Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd
 Are brought, and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice 600

Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethæan sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But Fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In cónfus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands 615
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of
A universe of death, which God by curse [death,
Created ev'il, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire.

Mean while the adversary' of God and Man,
 Satan with thoughts inflam'd of hig'hest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and tow'ards the gates of Hell
 Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left,
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
 Up to the fiery concave trowning high. 635
 As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the iles
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood 640
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
 Ply stemming nightly tow'ard the pole. So seem'd
 Far off the flying Fiend: at last appear
 Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice three-fold the gates; three folds were brass,
 Three iron, three of adamantin rock, 646
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;
 The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair, 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting: about her middle round
 A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark 654
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
 A hideous pale; yet, when they list, would creep,

If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts 660
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the Night-hag, when call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon 665
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night, 670
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast 675
With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing nought valued he nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began. 680

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,

That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee: 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with spi'rits of Heav'n.

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd.
 Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he
 Who first broke peace in Heav'n and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms 691
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's sons
 Conjur'd against the Hig'h'est, for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with spi'rits of Heav'n,
 Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn
 Where I reign king, and to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings, 700
 Left with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy lingring, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threatning, grew ten-fold 705
 More dreadful and deform: on th' other side
 Incens'd with indignation Satan stood
 Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' Arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands

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No second stroke intend, and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With Heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front 716
Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown, so match'd they stood;
For never but once more was either like 721
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky forcerers that sat
Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.
O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son? What fury, O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above and laughs the while 731
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
Forbore, then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740

What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why
In this infernal vale first met thou call'st
Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my Son;
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee. 745

T' whom thus the portress of Hell gate reply'd.
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim with thee combin'd 750
In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide, 755
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
'Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd
All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign 760
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burden. Mean while war arose,
And fields were fought in Heav'n; whereina remain'd

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(For what could else?) to our almighty Foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout 770
Through all the empyréan: down they fell
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heav'n, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my open'ning. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy 785
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death;
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded Death.
I fled, but he pursued, (though more, it seems, 790
Inflam'd with lust than rage) and swifter far,
Me overtook his mother all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry 795
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd.

And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return and howl, and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth 800
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.

Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour 805
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O Father, I forewarn thee, shun 810
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore 815
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.
Dear Daughter, since thou clam'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of; know 821
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host

Of spi'rits that in our just pretences arm'd 825
Fell with us from on high : from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of blifs
In the purlicus of Heav'n, and therein plac'd
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd, 835
Left Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broils : be this or ought
Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen 841
Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
With odors ; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846
His famin should be fill'd, and blest his maw
Destin'd to that good hour : no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
And by command of Heav'n's all-pow'ful King
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock

These adamantin gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born, 860
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey 865
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as befits
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And tow'ards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers 875
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy ir' on or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880

Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host 885
Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace' mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth;
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battel bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray

By which he reigns : next him high arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyfs 910
 'The womb of Nature and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds :
 Into this wild abyfs the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
 Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd 920
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
 With all her battering engins bent to rase
 Come capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements 925
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The stedfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious; but that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity : all unawares
 Fluttering his pennons vain plumb down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 935
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,

Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea, 939
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half fly'ing; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspean, who by stealth 945
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
At length a universal hubbub wild 951
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd;
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power 955
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord'ring on light; when strait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthron'd
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
'The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name

Of Damogorgon; Rumour next and Chance, 965
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

'T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers
 And Spirits of this nethermost abyfs,
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy, 979
 With purpose to explore or to disturb

'The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
 Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975

What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with Heav'n; or if some other place,
 From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive

I travel this profound; direct my course; 980

Directed no mean recompense it brings

To your behoof, if I that region lost,

All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce

To her orig'inal darkness and your sway,
 (Which is my present journey) and once more 985

Erect the standard there of ancient Night;

Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,

With faltring speech and visage incompas'd,

Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art, 990

That mighty leading angel, who of late

Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrown.

I saw and heard, for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frightened Deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 993
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend, 1000
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
Weakning the scepter of old Night: first Hell
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain 1005
To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go and speed;
Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan stay'd not to reply, 1010
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round 1015
Environ'd wins his way; harder beset
And more indanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus betwixt the jutting rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larbord shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd. 1020

So he with difficulty' and labor hard
Mov'd on, with difficulty' and labor he;
But he once past, soon after when Man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way 1026
Over the dark abyſs, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length
From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spi'rits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro 1031
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night 1036
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
As from her outmost works a broken foe
With tumult less and with less hostile din, 1040
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 1045
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,

With opal tow'rs and battlements adorn'd
Of living saphir, once his native seat; 1050
And fast by hanging in a golden chain
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurs'd, and in a curst hour he hies. 1055

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

The Argument.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting Mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free and able enough to have withstood his Tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since call'd the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, describ'd ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and Man whom God had plac'd here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born,
Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee' unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light

Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee, 5
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest 10
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight 15
Through utter and through middle darkness borne
With other notes than to th' Orphéan lyre
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs, 25
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt,
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowry brooks beneath, 30
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget

Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides, 35
 And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadieft covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of Knowledge fair
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of Nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the Mind through all her powers
 Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had th' almighty Father from above,
 From the pure empyrean where he sits
 High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
 His own works and their works at once to view:
 About him all the sanctities of Heaven 60

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Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first Parents, yet the only two 65
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love
In blisful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings and willing feet
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament, 75
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage 80
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyfs'
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,

Directly tow'ards the new created world,
And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay 90
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert,
For Man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall, 95
He and his faithless progeny: Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' ethereal powers 100
And spi'rits, both them who stood and them who
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell. [fail'd;
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd, 105
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also' is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd Necessity, 110
Not me? They therefore as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly' accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination over-rul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree 115
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed

Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow' of fate, 120
Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they chuse; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain
Till they inthral themselves; I else must change 125
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd 130
By th' other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy' and justice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory' excel,
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All Heav'n, and in the blessed spi'rits elect 136
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face 140
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which put'ting thus he to his Father spake.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd

Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace ; 145
For which both Heav'n and Earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Incompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.

For should Man finally be lost, should Man, 150
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly ? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine ? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell 160
Draw after him the whole race of Mankind,
By him corrupted ? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake

For him, what for thy glory thou hast made ?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165
Be question'd and blasphem'd without defense

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed :

Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew 175
His laps'd powers, though forfeit and inthral'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest; so is my will;
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due, 190
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavor'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear, 195
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long suff'rance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200

That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done; Man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heav'n, 205
 Affecting God-head, and so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,
 But to destruction sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die,
 Die he or Justice must; unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say heav'nly Powers, where shall we find such love?
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save? 215
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
 And silence was in Heav'n: on Man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all Mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;
 And shall Grace not find means, that finds her way,

The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring: 235
Behold me then; me for him, life for life
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
Account me Man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
Well pleas'd; on me let Death wreck all his rage;
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ev'er; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due 245
All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with Corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive mangre Hell, and show 255
The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight

Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
 Then with the multitude of my redeem'd 260
 Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
 And reconcilment; wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 265

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seisd
 All Heav'n what this might mean, and whether tend
 Wondring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
 Found out for Mankind under wrath, O thou 275
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
 To me are all my works, nor Man the least,
 Though last created; that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
 By losing thee a while, the whole race lost. 280
 Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join;
 And be thyself Man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of Virgin seed,

By wondrous birth : be thou in Adam's room 285
The head of all Mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd
As many' as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit 290
Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd and die, 295
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying 306
God-like fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310
Far more than great or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory' abounds,

Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign 315
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed Universal King; all power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee as head supreme
Thrones, Principedoms, Pow'rs, Dominions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide 321
In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning arch-angels to proclaim 325
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long 336
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal scepter shall lay by,
For regal scepter then no more shall need, 340

God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honor him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout 345
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rang
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Tow'ards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast 351
Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of Life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offense 355
To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of Life,
And where the riv'er of Bliss through midst of Heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade the spi'rits elect 360
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams,
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses simil'd.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side 366
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce

Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 379
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.

Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible 375
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitst
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
 Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
 Thee next they sang of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
 Made visible, th' almighty Father shines, 386
 Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
 Imprefs'd th' effulgence of his glory' abides,
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
 He Heav'n of Heav'ns and all the pow'rs therein 390
 By thee created, and by thee threw down
 Th' aspiring Dominations: thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
 Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395
 Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.

Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
'Thee only' extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes, 399
Not so on Man: him through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy' and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity' incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pity' inclin'd, 405
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of Mercy' and Justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For Man's offense. O unexampled love, 410
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of Men, thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my Song
Henceforth, and never shall my Harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin. 415

Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs inclos'd 420
From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night

Starless expos'd, and ever-threatning storms 425
Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heav'n,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field. 430
As when a vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'ard the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams; 436
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land the Fiend 440
Walk'd up and down alone bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeless to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like acréal vapors flew 445
Of all things transitory' and vain, when Sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory' or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life; 450
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,

Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand, 455
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
Translated faints, or middle spirits hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain 466
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he who to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames, 470
Empedocles; and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friers
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery. 475
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n;
And they who to be sure of Paradise
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd; 480

They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
 And that crystallin sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;
 And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485
 Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air; then might ye see
 Cows, hoods, and habits with their wearers tost 490
 And flutter'd into rags, then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds: all these upwhirl'd aloft
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste 500
 His travel'd steps: far distant he descries
 Ascending by degrees magnificent
 Up to the wall of Heav'n a structure high;
 At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace gate, 505
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold
 Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth

By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
'The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
'To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of Heav'n. 515
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd 520
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
'The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
'The Fiend by easy' ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' Earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after times
Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood 535
To Beersaba, where the Holy Land

Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair 540
That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout
'Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn 545
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
'The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seis'd, though after Heaven seen,
'The spirit malign, but much more envy seis'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy 556
Of Night's extended shade) from eastern point
'Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond th' horizon; then from pole to pole 560
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His slight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way

Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there 570
He stay'd not to inquire: above them all
The golden sun in splendor likest Heav'n
Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,
By center, or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
Or longitude,) where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
Days months and years, tow'ards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with ought on earth, metal or stone;

Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing ir'on with fire;
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
 That stone, or like to that which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
 Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 'Th' arch-chemic Sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humor mix'd, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of color glorious, and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the devil met
 Undazled; far and wide his eye commands;
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620

To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd; but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders sledge with wings
Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spi'rit impure, as now in hope 630
To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
To Paradise the happy seat of Man,
His journey's end and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay: 635
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd:
Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a color'd plume sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright, 645
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and strait was known
Th' arch-angel Uriel, one of the seven

Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
That run through all the Heav'ns, or down to th' Earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those seven spi'rits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honor to obtain, and as his eye 660
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favor, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell; 670
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
The universal Maker we may praise;

Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better : wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false Dissembler unperceiv'd;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth :
And oft though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps 686
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems : which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the Sun, and held 690
The sharpest sighted spi'rit of all in Heav'n;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair angel, thy desire which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps 700
Contented with report hear only' in Heav'n :
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;

But what created mind can comprehend 705
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mold, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar 710
Stood rul'd, stood vast Infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding Darknes fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire; 715
And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is Earth the seat of Man, that light
His day, which else as th' other hemisphere 725
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring Moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
'Timely' interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.

That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735

Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
As to superior spi'rits is wont in Heav'n,
Where honor due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and tow'ard the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

The Argument.

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprize which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of Life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden describ'd; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of Knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a sunbeam warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escap'd the Deep, and pass'd at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower describ'd; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom question'd, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hinder'd by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O For that warning voice, which he who saw
'Th' Apocalyps heard cry in Heav'n aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,

Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now, 5
While time was, our first Parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret Foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of Mankind, 10
To wreck on innocent frail Man his loss
Of that first battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth 15
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devi'lish engin back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The hell within him; for within him hell 20
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
One step no more than from himself can fly
By change of place: now Conscience wakes Despair
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be 25
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes tow'ards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
Sometimes tow'ards Heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower: 30
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O Thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,

Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call, 33
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
'That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
'Till pride and worse ambition threw me down 40
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King:
Ah wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. 45
What could be less than to afford him praise,
'The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I sleind subjection, and thought one step higher 50
Would set me hig'hest, and in a moment quit
'The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
And understood not that a grateful mind 55
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd; what burden then?
O had his powerful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
'Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd 60

Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what t' accuse,
But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70
Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell; 75
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spi'rits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,

While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and scepter high advanc'd, 90
'The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon 94
Would highth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore? ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void:
For never can true reconciliation grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold in stead 105
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell Hope, and with hope farewell Fear,
Farewel Remorse: all good to me is lost;
Evil be thou my good; by thee at least 110
Divided empire with Heav'n's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As Man ere long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
'Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd 116

Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd fallhood under faintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount 126
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides 135
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd; and over head up grew
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend 140
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung:
Which to our general Sire gave prospect large

Into his nether empire neighb'ring round : 145
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colors mix'd :
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams 150
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath show'r'd the earth ; so lovely seem'd
That landskip : and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
All sadness but despair : now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabeian odors from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest ; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles :
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend 166
Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill

Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way:
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On the other side: which when th' Arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt, 180
At one slight bound high over leap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure, 186
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand Thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of Life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew, 195
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge 200

Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views 205
To all delight of human sense expos'd
In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A heav'n on earth : for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line 210
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telasar : in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd ; 215
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste ;
And all amid them stood the tree of Life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold ; and next to Life, 220
Our death the tree of Knowledge grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd ; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mold high rais'd 226
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,

Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden; thence united fell 230
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account; 235
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that saphir fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
Flow'rs, worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill and dale and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245
Imbrow'n'd the noontide bow'rs: thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
If true, here only', and of delicious taste:
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hilloc; or the flow'ry lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store, 255
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose:

Another side, umbrageous grotts and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant; mean while murm'ring waters fall 260
 Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
 Led on th' eternal Spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis 270
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this paradise
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian ile 275
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
 Hid Amalthea and her florid son
 Young Bacchus from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, 280
 Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
 True Paradise under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote

From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend 285
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honor clad
In naked majesty seem'd lords of all, 290
And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
(Severe but in true filial freedom plac'd)
Whence true authority in men; though both 295
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he and valor form'd,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She as a veil down to the slender waste
Her unadorned golden tresses wore 305
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd,

Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
 Of Nature's works, honor dishonourable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!
 So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
 Of God or angel, for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in Love's embraces met;
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325
 Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side
 They sat them down; and after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labor then suffic'd
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarin fruits which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers:
 The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind 335
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted. nor youthful dalliance as befits
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340

All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chafe
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant 345
To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent fly
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass 350
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
Declin'd was hastening now with prone career
To th' ocean iles, and in th' ascending scale
Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose: 355
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mold, Earth-born perhaps, 360
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The Hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah gentle Pair, ye little think how nigh 366
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,

More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd 370
Long to continue, and this high seat your heav'n
I'll fence'd for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek, 375
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me, 380
Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place, 385
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else though damn'd I should abhor.
So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
Down he alights among the sportful herd

Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unesp'y'd
To mark what of their state he more might learn 400
By word or action mark'd : about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft 405
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
Grip'd in each paw : when Adam first of men
To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
'Turn'd him all ear to hear new utterance flow. 410

Sole Partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
'That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite; 415
'That rais'd us from the dust and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Ought whereof he hath need, he who requires
From us no other service than to keep 420
'This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of Knowledge, planted by the tree of Life;

So near grows death to life, whate'er death is, 425
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given 430
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights: 435
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom 440
And from whom I was form'd flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly who enjoy 445
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Præminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.

Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposit 460
A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of Human Race. What could I do, 475
But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platan; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watry image: back I turn'd; 480

Thou following cryd'st aloud, Return fair Eve,
 Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee be'ing I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee clame
My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seis'd mine; I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general Mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
 On our first Father; half her swelling breast 495
 Naked met his under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms, 506
 'The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,

Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least 510
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths: all is not theirs it seems;
One fatal tree there stands of Knowledge call'd
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden? 515
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt 525
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd; 529
A chance but Chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring spi'rit of Heav'n by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. 535
So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,

But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his
Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heav'n [roam.
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night; 550
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarm'd youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555
On a sun beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste. 560

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at highth of noon came to my sphere

A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565
More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
God's latest image: I describ'd his way
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gate;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventur'd from the Deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitst,
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580
Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour
No creature thence: if spi'rit of other sort,
So minded, have o'er-leap'd these earthy bounds
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n 591
Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,

Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
 Diurnal, or this less volúbil Earth,
 By shorter flight to th' East, had left him there 595
 Arraying with reflected purple' and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.
 Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were sunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
 With living saphirs; Hesperus, that led 605
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Confort, th' hour
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest 611
 Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
 Labor and rest, as day and night to men
 Successive; and the timely dew of sleep
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines 615
 Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
 Rove idle unemploy'd, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body' or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways; 620

While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To morrow ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labor, to reform 625
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth :
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Mean while, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty' adorn'd.
My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst 635
Unargued I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the Sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth 645
After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,

And these the gems of Heav'n, her starry train :
But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends 650
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glitt'ring with dew; nor fragrance after show'rs;
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon, 655
Or glitt'ring star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
'This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?

To whom our general Ancestor reply'd.
Daughter of God and Man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
'These have their course to finish round the earth
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total Darkness should by night regain 665
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In Nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only' inlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night, 674
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
'That Heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep :
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night : how often from the steep 680
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others note,
Singing their great Creator ? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds 686
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heav'n.

Thus talking hand in hand alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r ; it was a place 690
Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use ; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf ; on either side 695
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub
Fenc'd up the verdant wall ; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin
Rear'd high their florish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic ; underfoot the violet, 700
Crocus, and hyacinth with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem : other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm durst enter none,

Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bow'r 705
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed, 710
And heav'nly quires the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our Sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O too like 715
In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day, 725
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our blifs
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race

To fill the Earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. 735

This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
Strait side by side were laid; nor turn'd I ween
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:

Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity and place and innocence, 745

Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.

Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our Destroyer, foe to God and Man?

Hail wedded Love, mysterious law, true source 750
Of human offspring, sole propriety

In Paradise of all things common else.

By thee adult'rous Lust was driv'n from men

Among the bestial herds to range; by thee

Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755

Relations dear, and all the charities

Of father, son, and brother, first were known.

Far be' it, that I should write thee sin or blame,

Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,

Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760

Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile 765
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd,
 Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Show'r'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
 Blest Pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775

Now had Night measur'd with her shadowy cone
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour stood arm'd
 To their night watches in warlike parade, 780
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the South
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the North;
 Our circuit meets full West. As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785
 From these, two strong and subtle spi'rits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed

Search through this Garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harm.

This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought ?) escap'd
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt : 795
Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bow'r direct
In search of whom they fought : him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800
Assaying by his devilish art to reach

The organs of her fancy', and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise 805
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,

Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingend'ring pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810

Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness : up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815
Fit for the tun some magazine to store

Against a rumor'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd inflames the air :
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd 820
So sudden to behold the grisly King ;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.

Which of those rebel spi'rits adjudg'd to Hell
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison ? and transform'd,
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait, 825
Here watching at the head of these that sleep ?

Know ye not then, said Satan fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not me ? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar :
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
The lowest of your throng ; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain ?

To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn.
'Think not, revolted Spi'rit, thy shape the same, 835
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure ;
'That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee' ; and thou resemblest now
'Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the cherub ; and his grave rebuke,

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Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845
Invincible: abash'd the devil stood,
And felt how awful Goodness is, and saw
Virtue' in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sencer not the sent;
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do 855
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief
Gabriel from the front thus call'd aloud. 865

O Friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendor wan; who by his gate 870
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;

Stand firm, for in his look Defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd. 876

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow. 885
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Tho' thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place 891
Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
But evil hast not try'd: and wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900

But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling thus reply'd.
O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905
And now returns him from his prison 'scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicenc'd from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
However, and to 'scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? courageous Chief, 920
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alledg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answer'd frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, 925
Insulting angel; well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battel to thy aid
The blasting volied thunder made all speed,

And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves
 From hard assays and ill successes past
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untry'd :
 I therefore, I alone first undertook 935
 To wing the desolate abyfs, and spy
 This new created world, whereof in Hell
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
 Better abode, and my afflicted powers
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940
 Though for possession put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight. 945
 To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd.
 To say and strait unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader but a liar trac'd,
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add ? O name, 950
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd !
 Faithful to whom ? to thy rebellious crew ?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power supreme ?

And thou, fly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope 960
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now, Avant;
Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facil gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage reply'd.

Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970
Proud liminary cherub, but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,
Left on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves

Prove chaff. On t'other side Satan alarm'd 985
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd :
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp 989
 What seem'd both spear and shield: now dreadful
 Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise [deeds
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 'Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Aстреa and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round Earth with balanc'd air 1000
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battels and realms: in these he put two weights
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend. 1005
 Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
 Neither our own but giv'n; what folly then
 To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign, [weak,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how

If thou resist. The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled 1014
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of Night.

The End of the Fourth Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

The Argument.

Morning approach'd, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day labors: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God to render Man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise, his appearance describ'd, his coming discern'd by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates at Adam's request who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the North, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

NOW Morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the Earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was aery light from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapors bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwak'n'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest: he on his side

Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice 15
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How Nature paints her colors, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.

O Sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night 30
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd;
If dream'd, not as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
But of offense and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: Methought 35
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,
Why sleep'st thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields

'To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
'Tunes sweetest his love-labor'd song; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy fets off the face of things, in vain,
If none regard; Heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire? 45
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
'To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways 50
'That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted Knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wondring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heav'n
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd 56
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit furcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor Man? is knowledge so despis'd? 60
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good, why else set here?
'This said, he paus'd not, but with ventrous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted; me damp horror chill'd 65
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,

Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus crompt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men : 70
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The Author not impair'd, but honor'd more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thou also; happy though thou art, 75
Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be :
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to Heav'n, by merit thine, and see 80
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savory smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various: wondring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly 90
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.
Best image of myself and dearer half, 95

The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear;
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes, 105
 Which Reason joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell when Nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
 Wild works produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances methinks I find
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream, 115
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or man
 May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
 No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene,

Than when fair Morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
'That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arbo'rous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landskip all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
In various stile; for neither various stile
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,
More tungeable than needed lute or harp 151

To add more sweetness; and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sitst above these heav'ns 156
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of Light, 160
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heav'n,
On Earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end. 165
Fairest of Stars, last in the train of Night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling Morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies, 176
And ye five other wand'ring Fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.

Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 180
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye Mists and Exhalations that now rise 185
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
'Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honor to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolor'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow 195
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living Souls: ye Birds,
'That singing up to Heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
'The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
'To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still 205
'To give us only good; and if the night
Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,

Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste
 Among sweet dewes and flow'rs; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215
 To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd 220
 Raphael, the sociable spi'rit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
 His marriage with the sev'ntimes-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on Earth
 Satan from Hell 'scap'd through the darksome gulf
 Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd 226
 This night the human pair, how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all Mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,
 To respite his day-labor with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his power left free to will, 235

Left to his own free will, his will though free;
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not too secure: tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fall'n himself from Heav'n, is plotting now 240
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
But by deceit and lies; this let him know,
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd. 245

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
After his charge receiv'd; but from among
Thousand celestial Ardors, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light 250
Flew through the midst of Heav'n; th' angelic quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
Divine the Sovran Architect had fram'd.
From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos'd, however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd
Above all hills. As when by night the glass 261
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:

Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens 265
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steddý wing
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom Air; till within soar 270
Of tow'ring eagles, to' all the fowls he seems
A phœnix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
When to inshrine his reliques in the Sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A seraph wing'd; six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
Girt like a starry zone his waste, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colors dipt in Heav'n; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Strait knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high in honor rise;
For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come

Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
Him through the spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun 300
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
For dinner savory fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honor and receive 315
Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertil growth, and by disburd'ning grows

More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare. 320

To whom thus Eve. Adam, Earth's hallow'd mold,
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons; ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes: 325
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd; will pluck such choice
To entertain our angel guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heav'n. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever Earth all-bearing mother yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where 340
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
She tempers dulcet creams, nor these to hold

Wants her fit vessels pure, then strows the ground
With rose and odors from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great Sire, to meet 350
His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long 355
Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
Dazzles the croud, and sets them all a-gape.
Nearer his presence Adam though not aw'd,
Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
As to' a superior nature, bowing low, 360
Thus said. Native of Heav'n, for other place
None can than Heav'n such glorious shape contain;
Since by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
To want, and honor these, vouchsafe with us 365
Two' only, who yet by sovran gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild.
Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spi'rits of Heav'n
To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower 375

O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbor smil'd
 With flow'rets deck'd and fragrant smells; but Eve
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to' entertain her guest from Heav'n; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel Hail 385
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

Hail Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All Autumn pil'd, though Spring and Autumn here
 Dan'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began 396
 Our Author. Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400
 The earth to yield; unfavory food perhaps
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the angel. Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part 405
Spiritual, may of purest spi'rits be found
No' ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty 410
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed; of elements 415
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapors not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even 425
Sups with the ocean. Though in Heav'n the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here 430
Varied his bounty so with new delights,

As may compare with heaven; and to taste
'Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spi'rits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal th' empiric alchemist 440
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold
As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence 445
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to' have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell. 450

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference to know
Of things above his world, and of their being 455
Who dwell in Heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech

Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd. 460

Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favor, in this honor done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heav'n's high feasts to' have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged hierarch reply'd.
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure, 475
As nearer to him plac'd or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
'Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aery, last the bright consummate flower 481
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
'To vital spi'rits aspire, to animal, 485
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,

Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient di'et, nor too light fare; 495
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heav'nly paradises dwell; 500
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more. 505

To whom the Patriarch of Mankind reply'd.
O favourable Spi'rit, propitious Guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set
From center to circumference, whereon 510
In contemplation of created things
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert, 515

Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?

To whom the angel. Son of Heav'n and Earth,
Attend; That thou art happy, owe to God; 525
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.

This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere 535
He left it in thy power; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity:

Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him 530
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse?

Myself and all th' angelic host, that stand 535
In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none; freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will

To love or not; in this we stand or fall: 540
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from Heav'n to deepest Hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss into what woe!

To whom our great Progenitor. Thy words
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545
 Divine Instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills
 Aereal music send: nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free;
 Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assur'd me', and still assure: though what thou tell'st
 Hath pass'd in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred Silence to be heard;
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the Sun
 Hath finish'd half his journey', and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of Heav'n. 560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël
 After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'st me', O Prime of Men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense th' invisible exploits 565
 Of warring spirits? how without remorse
 The ruin of so many glorious once
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good 570
 'This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach

Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best; though what if Earth
Be but the shadow' of Heav'n, and things therein 575
Each to' other like, more than on earth is thought?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these Heav'ns now roll, where Earth
Upon her center pois'd; when on a day [now rests
(For time, though in eternity, apply'd 580
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future) on such day
As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
Of angels by imperial summons call'd,
Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585
Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appear'd
Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye Angels, progeny of Light, 600
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.

This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605

At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great vice-gerent reign abide
United as one individual soul 610

For ever happy: him who disobey,
Me disobey, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into' utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end. 615

So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleas'd; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the Sacred Hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620
Of planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervold, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions Harmony divine 625
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd

(For we have also' our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need)
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heav'n. 635
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who shower'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy. 641
Now when ambrosial Night with clouds exhal'd
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest heav'n had chang'd
To grateful twilight (for night comes not there 645
In darker veil) and roseat dew's dispos'd
All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
(Such are the courts of God) th' angelic throng, 650
Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept 654
Fann'd with cool winds; save those who in their course

Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heav'n; he of the first,
If not the first arch-angel, great in power, 660
In favor and præminence, yet fraught
With envy' against the Son of God, that day
Honor'd by his great Father, and proclam'd
Messiah King anointed, could not bear 664
Through pride that sight, and thought himself im-
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain, [pair'd.
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipt, unobey'd the throne supreme 670
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, Companion dear; what sleep can close
Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
Of Heav'n's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to' impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate 681
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou

Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim Night 685
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march where we possess
The quarters of the North; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King 690
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false arch-angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere Night,
Now ere dim Night had disincumber'd Heav'n, 700
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice 705
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n;
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host. 710
Mean while th' Eternal Eye, whose sight discerns

Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread 715
Among the sons of Morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son thus said.

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might, 720
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we clame
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to' erect his throne 725
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious North;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battel, what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
In our defense, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735
Justly hast in derision, and secure
Laugh'ft at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal power

Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event 740
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heav'n.

So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
Far was advanc'd on winged speed, an host
Innumerable as the stars of night, 745
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones
In their triple degrees; regions to which 750
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd
At length into the limits of the North 755
They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer, (so call 760
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted) which not long after, he
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n, 765
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded, to consult

About the great reception of their King,
Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself ingross'd 775

All power, and us eclips'd, under the name
Of King Anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult how we may best
With what may be devis'd of honors new 780

Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endur'd
To one and to his image now proclam'd?

But what if better counsels might erect 785
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and chuse to bend
The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust

To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heav'n possess'd before 790
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees

Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right 795

His equals, if in power and splendor less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce

Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration to th' abuse 800
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
The Deity', and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n 810
Expected, least of all from thee, Ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son by right indued 815
With regal scepter, every soul in Heav'n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due
Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign, 820
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of Heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being?
Yet by experience taught we know how good, 826

And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near 830
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself though great and glorious dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom 835
As by his Word the mighty Father made
All things, ev'n thee; and all the spi'rits of Heav'n
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential powers; nor by his reign obscur'd, 841
But more illustrious made; since he the head
One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
His laws our laws; all honor to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage, 845
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850
Or singular and rash, whereat rejoic'd
Th' Apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.

That we were form'd then say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? strange point and new! 855

Doctrin which we would know whence learn'd: who
When this creation was? remember'st thou [saw
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rai'd 860
By our own quick'ning power, when fatal Course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.
Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
'These tidings carry to th' anointed King; 870
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said, and as the sound of waters deep
Hoarse Murmur echo'd to his words applause
Through the infinite host; nor less for that
The flaming seraph fearless, though alone 875
Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O Alienate from God, O Spi'rit accurs'd,
Forfaken of all good; I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees

Against thee are gone forth without recal; 885
That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
Impendent, raging into sudden flame
Distinguish not : for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know. 895

So spake the seraph Abdiel faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, untterrify'd
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought; 905
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.

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